DH on Saturday

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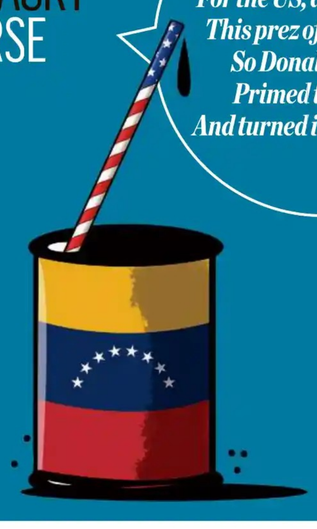
The Power of Good

WHACKY VERSE

Crude mood

For the US, a dirty fella—
This prez of Venezuela.
So Donald Trump
Primed the pump
And turned into his jailer.



All-round de Klerk dazzles as RCB beat MI by 3 wickets

P18

A stamp collector's journey

Today's *Saturday Story* takes you into the charming world of philately with a profile of a 73-year-old living in Bengaluru. He owns over 10,000 stamps and 1,000 picture postcards. Together, they chronicle stories of British India, young independent India, changing Bengaluru, space missions, and even a refugee crisis.

The SATURDAY STORY

Full story, Page 13

Trade talks stalled because Modi didn't call Trump: US

India says US commerce secretary's version of events 'not accurate'

NEW YORK/NEW DELHI, AGENCIES

India's trade pact with the United States stalled last year because Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not make a telephone call to President Donald Trump ahead of a deal, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said on Friday, giving an account of events that New Delhi has termed inaccurate.

Speaking on a podcast, Lutnick said India was given "three Fridays" to clinch a trade deal with Washington last year and that Modi had to call Trump to close it.

Lutnick said there had been an expectation that a deal with India would be sealed before those with Vietnam or Indonesia, which were signed in mid-2025, but the effort was derailed because New Delhi was "uncomfortable" setting up a call between Modi and Trump.

"So I said — You got to have Modi, it's all set up. You have to have Modi call the President. And they were uncomfortable doing it," Lutnick said on the All-In Podcast that was published Friday. "So Modi didn't call."

India dismissed the remarks. "The characterisation of these discussions in the reported remarks is not accurate," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, told reporters on Friday. He added that India and the US had been close to a trade deal on "several occasions".

A *Reuters* report cited an Indian government official involved in the talks as saying that Modi could not have called Trump, for fear that a one-sided conversation would put him on the spot.

▸ Trade talks, Page 7

TWO VERSIONS OF NEGOTIATIONS

US	INDIA
Howard Lutnick US Secretary of Commerce	**Randhir Jaiswal** External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson
■ Two countries were close to a deal	■ Both countries were close to a deal on several occasions
■ India was given 'three Fridays' to clinch deal	■ US characterisation of these discussions not accurate
■ Deal could have been sealed only if Modi called Trump, which didn't happen	■ Modi & Trump have spoken on the phone on eight occasions in 2025
■ After that, US immediately sealed deals with Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, and other countries	■ Committed to "mutually beneficial" deal between two "complementary economies"

Mamata takes to streets over ED raids, targets Shah

KOLKATA, DHNS: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday alleged that senior BJP leaders, including Union Home Minister Amit Shah, had benefitted from the same coal scam that the Enforcement Directorate had sought to link with the I-PAC, the political consultancy firm hired by her party, Trinamool Congress.

A day after she stormed into the I-PAC's office and the residence of its director, Pratik Jain, in the midst of raids by the ED in both locations, Mamata took to the streets and led a TMC protest march against what she called misuse of central agencies by the BJP-led Union government against Opposition parties.

She not only lodged complaints with the police against the ED officials and the paramilitary force personnel over the raids conducted on I-PAC by the central agency, but also sought to turn the tables on the BJP over corruption.

The ED, on the other hand, moved the Calcutta High Court, seeking a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation against Mamata, alleging that she, with the aid of the police, took away incriminating documents from the custody of its probe officials during the raids.

"They talk about coal scam money. But who takes the coal money? How is it taken? It goes through traitors. Jagannath to Suvendu to Amit Shah, this is the chain," Mamata alleged while addressing a rally at the end of the 10-km-long protest march in Kolkata. "I have all the proof on pen drives. I will release it when the time comes."

▸ ED raids, Page 7
Related report, Page 11

Thanisandra razing to help 'VIP land' access: Residents

BDA drive leaves flattened homes, teary-eyed residents

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bangalore Development Authority's (BDA) encroachment clearance drive in Thanisandra, in the city's northeast, has left a trail of flattened homes and teary-eyed residents.

While the agency maintains it is reclaiming government land in accordance with court orders, serious allegations have surfaced from the ground.

In an early-morning operation on Thursday, BDA officials, with a posse of 200 police personnel in tow, swooped down on Gupta Layout and Vidyasagar Layout, near Saraipalya, razing at least 36 structures, over 25 of them houses. The operation uprooted over 40 families.

Residents salvage household items during the demolition drive at Thanisandra. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

Displaced residents allege that the sudden urgency to clear these specific survey numbers (28/1 and 28/2) is not for public utility, but rather to facilitate a 100-foot-wide access road for a 14-acre private landholding reportedly belonging to a powerful minister in the state government.

Currently, the private property has a 15-foot approach road that passes through these survey numbers.

▸ Thanisandra, Page 7

Guv returns internal quota Bill, may hit recruitment

BENGALURU, DHNS: Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot has returned to the government the Bill that provides internal reservation among Scheduled Castes (SC), his office said on Friday.

Delay in approving this Bill, passed during the Belagavi session of the legislature last month, may impact government recruitment.

According to a statement from Lok Bhavan, Gehlot has returned the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (sub-classification) Bill to the government "seeking further clarifications". The Bill divides the 17% reservation for Scheduled Castes as per a 6-6-5 formula.

Madigas and 15 affiliated castes get 6% reservation (Group A), Holeyas and 18 affiliated castes also get 6% reservation (Group B) and Lambani, Bhovi, Korma, Korcha and 59 'most backward' communities get 5% (Group C).

▸ Quota Bill, Page 7

LOCAL POLL P 4

Govt notifies reservations for GBA wards

Just three days before the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a special petition on the delay in conducting local body elections, Karnataka has notified reservations for 369 wards under five municipal corporations in the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA).

KIA PICK-UP P 4

Chief secy reviews airport cab rules

Karnataka Chief Secretary Shalini Rajaneesh on Friday visited the Kempegowda International Airport to address mounting passenger complaints over the airport's new pick-up system. She directed BIAL to start a valet-based system for cars at P4.

FACT FINDING P 7

Ballari clash: Cong panel flags 'jealousy'

The Ballari violence on January 1 was due to "political jealousy", claimed a Congress fact-finding committee in its report. The panel also flagged "serious police lapses" and expressed concern over politicians hiring private gunmen.

CHECK MISUSE P 10

'Romeo-Juliet' clause needed in Pocso Act: SC

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre to introduce a "Romeo-Juliet" clause to exempt "genuine adolescent relationships" from its stringent provisions, after noting rampant misuse of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

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Bengaluru at a Swachh turning point

FOR A CLEAN CITY

What does the city's five-way division mean for participating in Swachh Survekshan?

SHREE D N
BENGALURU, DHNS

Ranked the ninth dirtiest city in India in the Swacch Sarvekshan Rankings 2024, the annual cleanliness survey conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Bengaluru is at a crossroads this year when it comes to Swachh rankings.

Swachh rankings, conducted under the Swachh Bharat Urban Mission, assess the performance of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) annually across various cleanliness parameters. ULBs must regularly update their monthly Management Information System (MIS), which will be validated through citizen feedback; final rankings will then be determined by MoHUA.

The ULBs, or corporations, must document indicator-level progress systematically from April to March, which will be uploaded and verified during the final survey in February-March 2026.

Bengaluru, which had a single corporation, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, was divided into five corporations in May 2025, but the new corporations were formalised only in September 2025. Since the Swachh Survekshan runs from January to December, newly formed corporations will not be able to participate in the survey this year.

Ideally, the new ULBs formed by December can participate in the survey next year, after the state formally writes to MoHUA to notify them. Bengaluru's corporations can participate independently in Swachh Sarvekshan only from 2026-27 onward.

Swachh ranking this year

What does participating in Swachh Survekshan mean for a corporation? Every ULB (corporation) must submit applications for open defecation-free status, water management ratings and garbage-free city star rating. Of the 12,500 points awarded to a city, 3,500 carry major weight. Visible cleanliness carries 1,500 points, while information and advocacy activity carries 1,500 points.

Grievance redressal system carries 1,000 points this year. "If a complaint is addressed in four hours, the weightage is maximum. Eight hours of waiting to solve the issue reduces the points. If the issue takes 24 hours to resolve, then the points will be zero," explains Ram Prasad, co-founder of Friends of Lakes, who has worked with the BBMP for previous Swachh surveys.

"The three certifications (GFC, ODF++, and Water Plus) are crucial and should be prepared. If not, there's a high chance of losing Swachh Bharat Mission funds," he adds.

A city corporation should also diligently document efforts and outcomes throughout the year and upload data, documents, and geo-tagged photos to the dashboards. It should also ensure that the infrastructure required to maintain a clean city, such as toilets, sewage treatment plants, faecal waste management systems, and drains, is in place. When the auditors empanelled by the centre conduct surveys, the ULB should respond to observations, issue clarifications, and address non-compliances.

Given these complications, Ram Prasad says that this year the city can obtain the necessary certifications without participating in the survey itself, thereby ending confusion about how to manage the survey across five corporations.

However, officials familiar with the matter confirmed that the entire city of Bengaluru will participate as a single unit in the 2025-26 Swachh survey, with no separate surveys for the corporations.

The city's sole waste management agency, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), is about to finalise the tender to engage an agency for information, education, and communication activities related to Swachh Survekshan. Subsequently, various teams will be formed, and information and awareness programmes, as well as surveys, will be conducted, say sources.

The city often struggles to maintain visual cleanliness. DH PHOTO/BK JANARDHAN

Swachh rankings: What gets how much score?

Section	% Marks	Marks	Indicators	Sub-Indicators
Visible cleanliness	15%	1,500	12	33
Segregation, collection & transportation of waste	10%	1,000	3	12
Solid waste management	15%	1,500	11	25
Access to sanitation	10%	1,000	4	36
Used water management	10%	1,000	5	8
Mechanization of desludging services	5%	500	3	19
Advocacy for Swachhta	15%	1,500	6	24
Ecosystem strengthening & institutional parameters	8%	1,000	2	5
Overall welfare of sanitation workers	5%	500	2	9
Citizen feedback & grievance redressal	10%	1,000	2	2
Total	100%	10,500	50	173

Indicators which are not applicable for a particular category of ULBs, the marks will be redistributed proportionally to other relevant indicators.

SOURCE: SBM TOOLKIT

Challenges for next year

If individual corporations were to participate in the 2026-27 Swachh rankings, to be released in 2027, the basic process should already have started, and all the corporations would need to demonstrate their waste-handling infrastructure. It carries 1,500 points in the current system.

"In the current situation, the existing processing plants and infrastructure need to be shown as divided between each of the five corporations," he adds. This implies that every corporation must either develop its own designated infrastructure as soon as possible, or compete as one city next year, if the Swachh guidelines permit. This means that if one corporation is better than the others at waste management and cleanliness, that advantage will not be recognised, as the city is treated as a single unit.

While BSWML handles garbage collection, transportation, and processing, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) handles water and sanitation for the entire city and is responsible for water-related ratings, particularly for wastewater management. This is not dependent on BWSSB alone — each of the city corporations contributesto the management of the mismanagement by way of enforcement of rules and regulations for treated water and building bylaws,

Pourakarmikas remove illegal posters and banners in Ramamurthy Nagar area, Bengaluru East Corporation.

The city's used-water management infrastructure is not in good shape, with private players such as apartments being unsure where excess treated water can go, and the state's pollution watchdog failing to monitor and ensure quality in treated water. If five corporations do not have uniform rules and ways to handle used water, this can turn into a problem, reducing ratings

Many little things that matter

Padmashree Balaram, a member of the Solid Waste Management Round Table (SWMRT) and a resident of Koramangala, shares the success story of distributing 40 leaf-litter composting units across the city.

"The BSWML funded Rs 5 lakh for it. We got the leaf litter composting units fabricated and distributed them across the city, to the volunteers who said they will take care of them," she reveals. She is hopeful that the spread of composting culture will contribute to the no-garbage-on-the-ground policy.

Recently, Koramangala got a waste processing plant with segregation and biomethanisation facilities, backed by BSWML. The way wet and dry waste is processed and managed at the waste processing unit led Bengaluru South City Corporation Commissioner K N Ramesh to believe that similar plants could be established in all Assembly constituencies in the coming days. If this happens, it enables a corporation to manage waste more independently, providing a stronger foundation for participating in the Swachh survey.

Decentralisation through new corporations might have begun to address visual cleanliness in the city more effectively than before. Intensive cleaning drives and awareness programmes are now held more regularly across each corporation than before. For instance, the Bengaluru North corporation organises competitions among its wards during such drives, in which officials in each ward vie for the top spot through rigorous cleanliness initiatives.

Swachh rankings cannot be ignored, cautions Ram Prasad. "The global firms that come to our city do keep an eye on cleanliness rankings and infrastructure. It matters for the city's investment and economic status. Better rankings mean better prospects as a city," he adds.

Feedback:
pointblank@ deccanherald.co.in

METRO

Campus protests erupt after dental student's suicide

Relatives allege sustained harassment by faculty

BENGALURU, DHNS

Hundreds of students at a private dental college in southern Bengaluru protested on campus on Friday, demanding action against the faculty after a 22-year-old student allegedly died by suicide.

Yashaswini S, a third-year Oral Medicine and Radiology student, was found dead at her home in Headmaster Layout, Chandapura, on Thursday evening.

Her mother Parimala said Yashaswini faced sustained harassment at the college and was repeatedly denied opportunities to present seminars. She was not assigned radiology cases, which caused her mental distress.

Yashaswini

Parimala further claimed that Yashaswini had taken leave on Wednesday due to eye pain. When she returned to college on Thursday, a lecturer allegedly humiliated her before other students by questioning her about the eye drops used, number of drops, and mockingly suggesting she had poured the entire bottle into her eyes. Upset, she went home and allegedly ended her life.

The family has demanded action against the principal and lecturer involved.

After her death, Yashaswini's classmates and other students protested in front of the college and near the mortuary, demanding justice.

Holding her photograph and raising slogans like 'Justice for Yashaswini', the protesters accused the college management of creating a hostile environment for students.

Students also alleged that others in the Oral Medicine and Radiology Department faced similar harassment and demanded action against the teaching staff.

Based on a complaint, the Surya City police have registered a case of unnatural death and will take further action based on evidence, an officer said.

CBI traps CPRI joint director accepting Rs 9.5-lakh bribe

Agency recovers Rs 3.7 cr in cash; searches continue

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday said it had arrested two persons, including the joint director of the Central Power Research Institute (CPRI), Bengaluru, in a Rs 9.5-lakh bribery case.

The agency said it registered the case on January 8 against the CPRI official and other private persons over allegations of obtaining bribes for issuing favourable test reports for electrical equipment produced by Sudhir Group of Companies.

"After registration of the FIR, the CBI laid a trap and arrested the joint director of the Central Power Research Institute, Bengaluru, along with an executive of the private company while transacting the bribe amount of Rs 9.5 lakh, on 9.01.2026, at Bengaluru," the CBI said.

"During searches at the residence of the public servant, cash of Rs 3.59 crore, foreign currency including US, Hong Kong and Singapore dollars, Indonesian Rupiah, Malaysian Ringgit, Euro, Yuan (Renmin), Swedish Krona and UAE Dirhams worth Rs 4,05,858 (approx) was recovered, along with jewellery and other incriminating documents.

"The searches have led to a cash recovery of about Rs 3.76 crore so far (including foreign currency). Searches are continuing.

The investigation is in progress," the agency added.

Rapido bike taxi driver arrested for molesting woman passenger

BENGALURU, DHNS: Police have arrested a Rapido bike taxi driver for allegedly molesting a woman passenger during a ride in the city.

The victim, a 29-year-old resident of Nagarabhavi 2nd Stage, works as a manager at an IT firm in Embassy Manyata Business Park. She had booked the bike taxi around 8 am on Wednesday after getting late for work.

Police said the rider, Rohith, 37, allegedly misbehaved with the woman and groped her soon after picking her up. Despite her warning him to behave and stop the bike, he allegedly continued riding. He later stopped near an underpass, where he is accused of molesting her again.

The woman raised an alarm, drawing the attention of traffic police, who alerted the Hoysala patrol. She later approached the Annapoorneshwari Nagar police and lodged a complaint.

Based on the ride details provided by the complainant, police arrested Rohith from his residence in Manjunath Nagar. A court has remanded him to judicial custody.

Man falls from bike, run over by BMTC bus near E-City

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 28-year-old man was killed after being run over by a BMTC bus near Electronics City on Friday.

The deceased was identified as Kaniraj, a native of Tamil Nadu, police said.

A preliminary probe revealed that Kaniraj was riding a two-wheeler with two friends when he lost balance, fell on the road and was run over by the bus.

He was declared dead at a hospital, while his friends sustained injuries, the police added.

Bomb threat to Kendriya Vidyalaya turns out to be hoax

BENGALURU, DHNS

Panic prevailed at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Hebbal, after the school received an email threatening a bomb blast and claiming that three RDX-based improvised explosive devices (IEDs) had been planted on the campus.

The threat was later declared a hoax after a thorough search by the police.

Sadashivanagar police said the email was sent to the school's official email address in the early hours of January 7 from arundalekumar@hotmail.com.

The sender claimed the IEDs would explode at 1.35 pm.

Following a complaint by school principal Anand Prakash, police conducted a detailed search of the premises with bomb disposal and dog squads. No explosives were found, police said.

Incidentally, the same email ID was used to send a similar bomb threat to the Regional Passport Office (RPO), Bengaluru, on January 6, according to police investigations in the case.

In July 2025, around 40 private schools across Bengaluru had received similar bomb threat emails.

Cops file charge sheet against city doctor for killing wife with anaesthetic drug

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Marathahalli police on Friday filed a detailed charge sheet before a Bengaluru court in the case in which a city-based surgeon is accused of murdering his wife using a powerful anaesthetic drug.

Police have charged Dr Mahendra Reddy G S, 31, with the murder of his wife, dermatologist Dr Kruthika M Reddy (29).

According to police sources, the charge sheet, running to nearly 4,000 pages, includes technical evidence, forensic reports and other material to prove that Reddy murdered his wife by injecting her with the controlled anaesthetic drug propofol.

The case came to light in October, nearly six months after Kruthika's death. A forensic report detected traces of drugs in her organs, prompting the police to arrest Reddy, a gastro surgeon, on suspicion of murder.

In his complaint, Kruthika's father alleged that Reddy injected her multiple times with the drug through an intravenous cannula on her leg when she had complained of gastric issues.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Inauguration of 'International Year of Volunteers': Rishab Shetty, R Balasubramanyam to attend; Organised by Youth for Seva; RV Teachers College; 8.30 am.

Seminar on 'Hate Speech Bill and Civil Liberties': Santosh Hegde, BV Acharya, BV Rajaram, Jyotiprakash Mirji, Gomathi Devi, Vivek Subbareddy, Ranganath Bharadwaj; Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; 10.30 am.

Discussion: 'Is Bengaluru Providing a Healthy Life to Its Citizens?'; Dinesh Gundu Rao, CN Ashwath Narayan, Shrilatha Rao Seshadri, Nachiket Mor; Organised by Janaagraha; Bangalore International Centre (BIC); 11 am.

CULTURAL

Bharatanatyam Arangetram: Keerthana MS to perform; Mysore B Nagaraj, Padmini Shridhar to attend; Sevasadana; 4.30 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	26.0°C
Minimum	15.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	88%
Sunset (Jan 10)	6:09 pm
Sunrise (Jan 11)	6:44 am
Moonrise	11:30 pm
Moonset	11:30 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

'Inclusion within Disability' at heart of Kalaangana's 19th edition celebrations

BENGALURU, DHNS: Kalaangana, an inclusive festival of art and culture, brought together children with disabilities, parents, teachers and caregivers in a vibrant celebration of talent, creativity, and community.

The two-day event, held on January 8 and 9, marked the 19th edition of the festival. Over 700 students from 29 schools participated.

Organised by the Bengaluru-based Information Resource Centre, this year's theme, 'Inclusion within Disability', stressed collaboration and shared participation among persons with diverse disabilities.

Students took part in group dance and music band performances, along with art displays. A tableau display was introduced this year as a new event for students, adding a strong visual and narrative element to the festival. Except for art, all student events were group performances.

"The idea was to bring together people with diverse disabilities to perform collectively, starting inclusion at the individual level," said Brunda Murthy, a career special educator at Leap Years by Adiksha, a Bengaluru-based learning centre for children with special needs.

"It is not the competition that matters, but the sense of community and belonging that Kalaangana fosters. That is the biggest reason many of us take part year after year."

The festival also expanded its inclusive approach beyond students. Teachers participated in competitions highlighting innovative teaching-learning materials, caregivers took part in rangoli making, and parents of children with special needs joined in art events —underscoring Kalaangana's focus on the entire support ecosystem around the child.

The Tom and Jerry Special School won the overall championship, with Eka Educational and Charitable Trust as runner-up.

‘They treated us like dogs’: Cold night for Thanisandra residents

BDA demolition drive leaves about 40 families homeless

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

Around 40 families, rendered homeless after the Bangalore Development Authority’s (BDA) demolition drive in Thanisandra, are spending nights in the biting January cold, uncertain of where to go next.

Though the BDA has arranged temporary shelters and food, residents, most of them tenants and lower-income families, say the relief is inadequate and the manner of the eviction inhumane.

“They came at 6 am on Thursday. We begged them to give us just one hour to move our belongings, but they treated us like dogs,” said a resident who had lived in the area for nearly a decade. “They dragged women and sleeping children out of their beds. Where is the humanity?”

Nasir Ahmed, a tenant whose home was among the first to be demolished, said officials showed no empathy. “They came and broke the house down. We are on the road now. No minister has come to help. They come only when they want votes. There are small children here, even children with disabilities. Where should we go? Show us a path,” he asked, gesturing at the rubble.

He said the demolition has triggered a health crisis as well. “Our landlord, who has lived here for 30 years, suffered a mild heart attack out of shock. We have lived here for five years. There was no prior notice, no safety arrangements. Now they talk about food, but who will give us a roof? They have even sealed our wells and we don’t have water to wash our children.”

Munir Ahmed, a driver, said he bought his house just three months ago for Rs 45 lakh. “I sold my daughter’s wedding jewellery and took loans. I checked the encumbrance certificate for 20 years, but there was no mention of the BDA. I pay all my taxes. If they touch my house again, my family will have no option but to die inside it,” he said.

Another resident, Samuel Raj, whose family has held the land since 1986, questioned the government’s role. “If this was BDA land, why did the sub-registrar allow the sale? Why did the BBMP collect tax and KEB give power connections?”

By Friday afternoon, the area resembled a war zone, with broken bricks, twisted steel, school bags, refrigerators and mattresses strewn across the mud.

Residents salvage belongings amid debris on day two of the BDA’s encroachment removal drive. DH PHOTO/BK JANARDHAN

For tenants, the crisis is compounded by the loss of advance deposits, now unlikely to be refunded.

While the BDA maintains it is acting within the law, for Thanisandra’s residents, the law has arrived as a wrecking ball.

Document verification ongoing at Kogilu: GBA chief

BENGALURU, DHNS: GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao said on Friday that the Bengaluru Urban deputy commissioner and GBA officials are continuing to verify property documents at Kogilu Layout, where dozens of houses were demolished during an encroachment clearance drive last month.

“All documents are being scrutinised to ensure that only eligible beneficiaries are allotted alternative housing. We are awaiting the report,” he said.

MUNIR AHMED, Resident

“I bought the house just three months ago for Rs 45 lakh. I sold my daughter’s wedding jewellery and took loans. I checked the encumbrance certificate for 20 years, but there was no mention of the BDA. I pay all my taxes. If they touch my house again, my family will have no option but to die inside it.

District administration reclaims govt land worth Rs 6.26 cr

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru Urban district administration on Friday said it reclaimed government land worth Rs 6.26 crore that had been illegally encroached upon.

Tahsildars across all taluks carried out a coordinated drive to clear encroachments on government properties, including cemetery land, conservancy land, stormwater drains and kharab land.

In all, 4 acres and 0.15 guntas of land were recovered. Of this, 0.04 guntas, valued at Rs 1 crore, was reclaimed in Bengaluru East taluk. The highest recovery was reported from Anekal taluk, where land worth Rs 3.3 crore was retrieved, according to an official release.

Feasibility studies on to add 200+ km of new metro corridors: BMRCL official

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is conducting feasibility studies for over 200 km of future corridors.

This year, Namma Metro is set to add 41 km to its network, reaching 137 km by year-end.

At an event on ‘Sustainability in Action: Bengaluru’s Urban Challenge’, Abhai Kumar Rai, Advisor (Civil), BMRCL, said the 41-km expansion would be completed by 2026, with another 38 km added in 2027, taking the network to 175 km by end of next year.

Rai joined a panel on ‘Urban Sustainability Without the Gloss’.

“We are moving ahead with Phase 3 (44 km), and DPRs for Phase 3A (36 km) are ready and under review for sanction.

“We are also studying over 200 km of new corridors to support Bengaluru’s long-term mobility needs,” he said, adding that Namma Metro would connect to the Kempegowda International Airport by 2027-end.

Beyond expansion, he highlighted metro efficiency technologies such as regenerative braking, delivering over 30% energy savings in train operations.

The event was organised by the Bangalore Chamber of Industry and Commerce (BCIC) and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).

Other panellists included Ajeet Kumar, Chief Engineer, CPWD; Ranjit Kumar, IVLP Fellow–Water Economics and Pricing, USA; Rajesh Kumar Jha, Chairman, Sustainability Expert Committee, BCIC; and Aloke Mukharjee, Program Lead-Research and Cities, WRI India.

Sanjay Seth, Vice-President and CEO, GRIHA Council, moderated.

MoU signed

The BCIC and GRIHA Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding for long-term collaboration on sustainable infrastructure and green building adoption in Bengaluru’s industrial and corporate sectors.

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Date: 31.12.2025
General Manager (RP & PM)

More city roads to come under pay-and-park regime

Soon, citizens may be able to reserve their parking slots online: GBA

BENGALURU, DHNS

After bringing 23 CBD roads under the pay-and-park scheme, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) is planning to expand the system to more roads citywide.

The Bengaluru Central City Corporation has floated a tender to engage private operators to collect parking fees on 23 roads for three years.

Commercial Street, Cambridge Road, Wood Street, Castle Street, Magrath Road, Church Street, Museum Road, Crescent Road, Brigade Road and Sampige Road are among the 23 roads set for the pay-and-park scheme.

GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao said other corporations might follow soon. “Bids for the tenders floated by the Central City Corporation open tomorrow. Based on the response, other corporations will identify and float tenders,” he said.

The system will streamline roadside parking and generate revenue for city corporations.

The GBA also plans to mark parking slots virtually. “If we mark slots virtually, citizens can reserve parking online through a web or mobile application. This will make it easier for the public as well,” Rao said.

The pay-and-park system on MG Road. DH FILE PHOTO

Only 5,000 applications for khata conversion in two months

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has received only about 5,000 applications for conversion from ‘B’ khata to ‘A’ khata.

The state government approved conversion of plots in Bengaluru, giving property owners 100 days to apply from November 1.

Nearly two months on, the civic authority has received only 5,000 applications, though the city has nearly 7.5 lakh ‘B’ khata properties. Citizens have said the high conversion fee makes the scheme unaffordable.

The GBA charges 5% of the property’s guidance value for conversion.

“We are only following government rules for collecting fees. The guidance value reflects the worth of the property, so we have to depend on it,” Rao said. He was hopeful more people will apply in the coming weeks.

Apartment STPs won’t fix stormwater drain crisis: Experts

BENGALURU, DHNS

Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) in apartment complexes are not a solution to Bengaluru’s overflowing stormwater drains, experts said at a city workshop on Friday.

Speaking at a panel discussion, Vishwanath S, Director of Biome Environmental Solutions, said: “The Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) must take accountability and responsibility for STPs. While builders can construct them, forcing apartments to maintain them is not ideal.”

The workshop, titled ‘Strategies for Decentralised Water Reuse in India’, was hosted by Well Labs, Bangalore Apartments’ Federation (BAF), and Eawag aquatic research.

BDA president Satish Mallya and T Mahesh, Director of Environmental Management and Policy Institute, called for a better and uniform policy for STPs and sewage treatment.

In his keynote address, Ram Prasath Manohar V, BWSSB Chairman, said there was a fundamental shift in how cities approach water management.

“People now focus more on reusing water than on how much is supplied. Reuse of treated wastewater is no longer a peripheral environmental intervention. It is becoming the backbone of urban water security,” he said.

He added: “Bengaluru currently treats around 1,348.5 million litres of wastewater every day through 34 centralised STPs. If reliably reused, this volume can meet most of the city’s non-potable demand — industry, construction, cooling, landscaping and lake replenishment — while reducing pressure on rivers and groundwater.”

He said reuse proved valuable during the 2024 water crisis by buffering drought impacts and supporting environmental recovery.

“However, nearly 825 MLD of treated water is currently used for lake rejuvenation — Chikkabalapur and Kolar projects from Koramangala-Challaghatta and Hebbal-Nagawara valley projects — and for minor irrigation. Commercial and industrial reuse remains limited, showing the need to scale decentralised systems with robust quality monitoring frameworks,” he said.

Manohar also noted that Bengaluru has one of the world’s largest decentralised STP footprints, with an estimated 4,500 apartment complexes, IT parks and campuses operating on-site treatment systems.

वरीय पुलिस अधीक्षक का कार्यालय, राँची।

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SWEET SPIKE

Sugarcane prices to surge as Sankranti demand peaks

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

As the city prepares for Makara Sankranti, the centrepiece of the festival — sugarcane — will become costlier.

Crop shortage has sent wholesale prices soaring, and traders warn of a steep hike as the festival approaches. Buyers are expected to throng markets between January 10 and 15.

Markets are being stocked with fresh sugarcane daily.

At KR Market, Zakriya Khan of KK Sugarcane Wholesalers said a bundle of 10 pieces is expected to retail between Rs 500 and Rs 600 this year, up from Rs 400 last year. “The supply is thin, and the demand will intensify from Saturday,” Khan said.

Festival demand lifts sugarcane trade at KR Market amid supply crunch. DH PHOTO/ASHWIN BM

Sumair Khan, another seller, noted that while premium quality sugarcane is arriving from Hoskote, Hassan, and Malur, the local supply is depleting. “The fields on the outskirts are vanishing. Where there were once lush sugarcane fields, we now see luxury villas and apartment complexes,” he said.

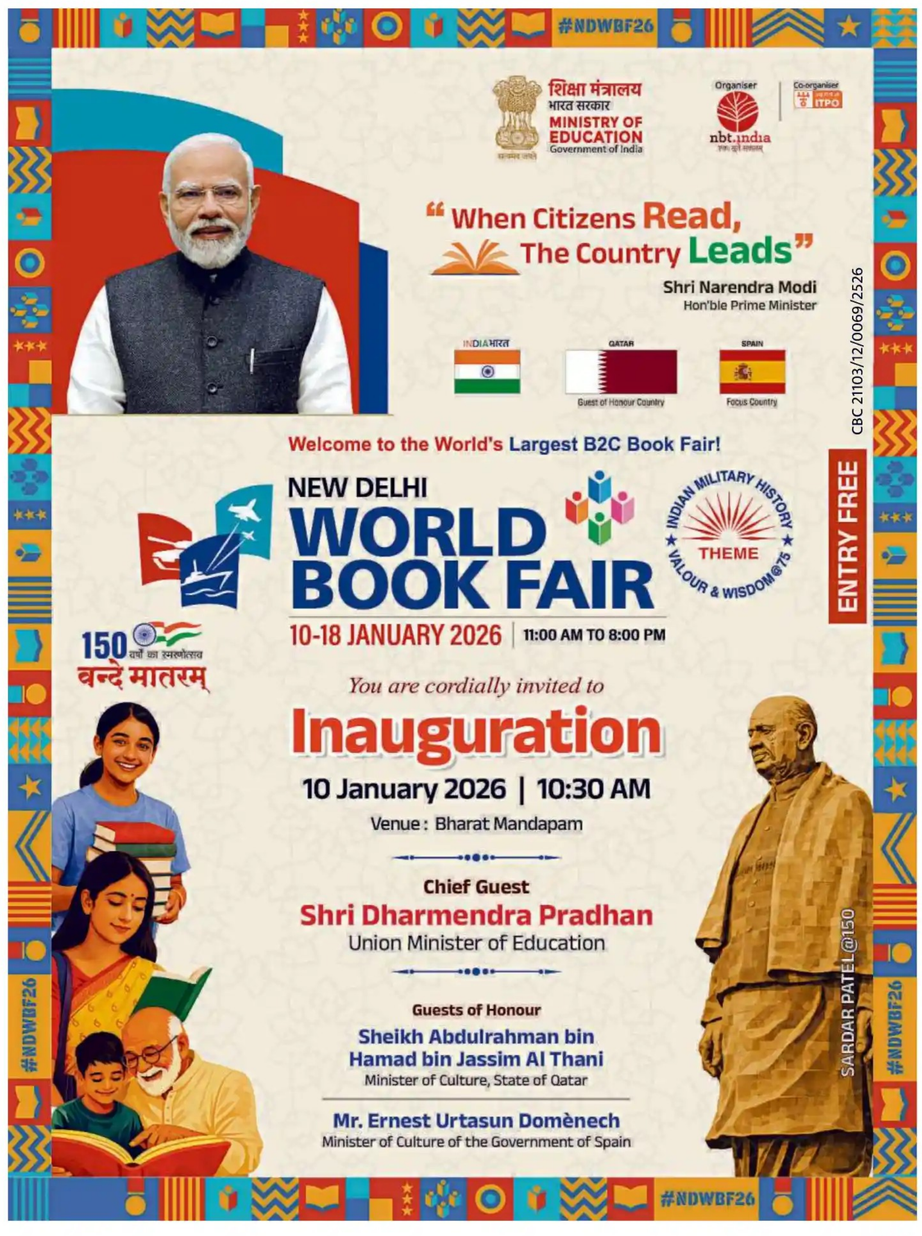
To bridge the gap, lower-quality imports from Tamil Nadu have entered the market, priced slightly lower at Rs 300 for 10 pieces.

Farmers now charge Rs 50 for a single piece at the field. Traders blame rapid urbanisation.

Data from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics and the Indian Sugar and Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) showed the state produced 5.6 crore metric tonnes of sugarcane in 2024, dropping to about 4.2 crore metric tonnes in 2025.

“The decline in yield per hectare in 2025 is due to erratic rainfall and adverse weather,” said a senior agriculture officer.

“While the government has hiked the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) to Rs 3,300 per tonne to support farmers, the actual availability of festival-specific long-stalk cane remains low,” the officer added.



CEC report: Resorts, roads cut into Bannerghatta's elephant corridors

'ESZ reduction has violated norms and harms animals'

BENGALURU, DHNS

The dilution of the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of Bannerghatta National Park (BNP) was not only against the rules but also impacted the three elephant corridors, the report of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) has said.

The Guidelines for Declaration ESZ, issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in February 2011, require the state government to include within ESZ wildlife sensitive corridors, landscape connectivity areas and other ecologically important patches.

Bannerghatta, home to three elephant corridors and a seasonal host to hundreds of elephants, was given an ESZ of 100 metres to 4.5 km from the boundary national park in the draft notification published in 2016. However, the cabinet sub-committee unilaterally reduced the same to 100 metres to 1 km.

The Karadikkal-Madeshwara Corridor, which provides a crucial passage for elephants moving from BNP to forests in Hosur, Tamil Nadu, has three types of disturbances: stone quarries, Anekal-Harohalli state highway traffic and resorts being developed on the southern boundary of the corridor, which is still active.

Bannerghatta, home to three elephant corridors, was given an eco-sensitive zone of 100 metres to 4.5 km from the boundary national park in the draft notification published in 2016. However, the cabinet sub-committee unilaterally reduced the same to 100 metres to 1 km. DH FILE PHOTO

The Thally-Bilikal corridor in the Harohalli range, which supports regular movement of 100-200 elephants between the BNP and the North Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, already has revenue lands creating a 300-metre gap in the connectivity. Ironically, an elephant-proof trench has been formed about 3 km in the Thally Reserved Forest and 3 km in the Bannerghatta National Park within the corridor area.

Apart from this, the corridor faces a threat from three roads (Thally-Maralavadi road, Elavanthe-Hosadoddi road and Therbidi-Kadusivanapalli) and two 765 KV transmission lines.

The Bilikal-Jawalagiri Corridor has two roads (Belalam-Kadusivanapalli and Elavanthe-Kadukempathalli), which affect the movement of 200 elephants between BNP and Jawalagiri forest in a different part of North Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary.

To a question, Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre said steps would be taken to restore elephant corridors without affecting the people.

"We aim to prevent man-animal conflict. We want to safeguard the interests of both humans and wildlife, he said.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds launches 'Mine Diamond Festival'

Shopping for diamond jewellery is witnessing a clear shift in mindset. Traditionally associated with weddings and family events, natural diamond jewellery is now increasingly purchased for a wider range of occasions, including milestone gifting, anniversaries, career achievements and everyday use.

This season is good for customers to invest in certified natural diamonds, known for rarity, enduring value and timeless appeal, with complete pricing clarity and service assurance. Malabar Gold & Diamonds announced the 'Mine Diamond Festival', an in-store showcase of certified natural diamond jewellery from its exclusive brand, Mine Diamonds. As part of the festival, you can avail up to 30 per cent off on diamond value, making it a unique opportunity to own authentic, natural diamonds with added value. The 'Mine Diamond Festival' will run from December 20, 2025 to January 26, 2026 across India.

It brings together a comprehensive selection from Mine Diamonds, spanning solitaires, celebration-ready natural diamond jewellery, lightweight everyday pieces and bridal favourites. Neckpieces, earrings, studs, rings, layered chains and coordinated sets, with designs ranging from understated, minimal styles to more statement-led silhouettes are on display. The showcase caters to both first-time natural diamond buyers and those looking to upgrade or expand their collection.

DH Malabar Gold & Diamonds

M P Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, said, "Today's customer wants natural diamonds that fit seamlessly into everyday life, backed by absolute clarity on certification and pricing. Mine Diamonds is built on that assurance through certified natural diamonds, transparent price break-ups and a stringent quality process".

Value-added services, including lifetime maintenance, one-year free insurance and a buy-back guarantee are offered too. Product pricing is displayed transparently with a clear break-up, including total weight, stone weight and making charges, enabling informed purchase decisions at every stage.

Curated by DH Brandspot

Gold Winner Presents Bhumika Club

Bhumika Club's 15th Bengaluru edition today

BENGALURU, DHNS: The 15th Bengaluru edition of Gold Winner presents Bhumika Club will be held on Saturday.

Scan Me

An initiative of *Deccan Herald* and *Prajavani*, the club aims to provide a platform for women from diverse walks of life to connect and network with one another. Since its launch in 2022, Bhumika Club has organised 34 editions across Karnataka.

This edition will be inaugurated by popular television actress Shyam Kanwar, best known for her role as Tara in the serial 'Karna' on Zee Kannada.

The event will include a children's fashion show, a 'Skill to Income' session by Asha Biradar, president of the WICCI Leadership Coaching Council, Karnataka, a Zumba session by fitness expert Chandana Lakshmikanth, a performance by singer Anagha M, and a cookery contest. The evening will feature games such as 'Spin the Wheel'. The winners will receive prizes, including a water purifier worth Rs 15,000, movie tickets at a multiplex, and a family dinner voucher at Kings Club.

January 10, 3.30 pm, Kings Club, Block-8, Lakeside, Sir M Vishwesharaiah Layout, Nagarabhavi. Entry free. Registration via QR code or call 90350 36186.

Govt notifies reservations for 369 GBA wards ahead of Supreme Court hearing

BENGALURU, DHNS

Just three days before the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a special petition on the delay in conducting local body elections, Karnataka has notified reservations for 369 wards under five newly carved municipal corporations in the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA).

While wards have been reserved across the General, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) categories, 50% of the wards have been reserved for women across all categories.

On Thursday night, the government published draft notifications announcing ward reservations separately for each of the five corporations in the official gazette, providing 15 days for citizens to raise objections, if any.

The notifications mark a major step towards holding elections to the long-delayed corporations in Bengaluru, which has been under bureaucratic and government-appointed administration since the term of the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) council ended in September 2020.

The publication of ward-wise reservations is also politically significant, as it determines which categories and wards will be open or reserved, compelling many former councillors and aspirants to either switch wards or drop out altogether. It will also allow political parties, including new entrants such as the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP) and Karnataka Rastra Samiti (KRS) to select candidates well in advance.

For instance, in the Bengaluru Central City Corporation, of the 63 wards, 11 are reserved for Scheduled Castes, one for Scheduled Tribes, 15 for Backward Class 'A', four for Backward Class 'B', and 32 fall under the General category, with the 50% women's reservation applied across categories.

However, questions have been raised over the number of wards reserved under different categories.

Former councillor NR Ramesh said the government had made "several mistakes" and suspected that the exercise was carried out in "haste" without adhering to reservation norms.

"As per the rules, 50% reservation must be provided for women in all corporations, but the women's quota falls short by 11 wards," he said, adding that the 33% reservation for OBCs has also been implemented incorrectly.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has also listed the case for hearing on Monday.

Unlike the previous election, which was held for 198 wards, the upcoming elections to Bengaluru's five municipal corporations will be contested across 369 wards, an increase of 171. This indicates that ward sizes have been reduced, a change that is expected to make electoral contests more competitive.

An official from the State Election Commission (SEC) said the final electoral rolls would be ready by March 16.

"We should be able to hold the elections in the summer, and the dates will be finalised while taking into account the examination schedule of college students," he said.

CS reviews new cab pickup rules at KIA

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Secretary (CS) Shalini Rajaneesh on Friday visited the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) to address mounting passenger complaints over the airport's new pick-up system.

Following a review of the airport premises, she directed Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) to introduce a valet-based system for private cars parked at P4. This is to ensure vehicles can be brought to the arrival lanes within four minutes.

Shalini also called for changes in the operations of the Karnataka State Tourism Development at the airport. The current agreement, which only allows KSTDC to operate Sedan cars, will be modified to allow other car types to operate at government-approved rates. And if required, provisions will be made to issue additional licenses to KSTDC.

BIAL has also been directed to work with the BMTC to find a viable solution for the reduced bus bays for BMTC at Terminal 1, the chief secretary told *DH*. During the review meeting with BIAL, officials explained that the four pick-up zones with three lanes each—12 lanes in total—outside Terminal 1 arrivals are designed to handle around 30 cars every 90 seconds.

However, until recently, nearly 100 vehicles were entering the space at a time, taking up to 10 minutes to clear. This mismatch led to chaos, artificial congestion and a sharp spike in passenger grievances, the BIAL management informed the CS, adding that the airport had reported a 100% surge in complaints concerning the same issue through its feedback system.

Officials acknowledged that there was no effective mechanism to regulate the entry of private and commercial vehicles, worsening the bottleneck.

The chief secretary was informed that, as per norms followed at national and international airports, private vehicles (white board) are allowed free access for pick-ups, while commercial vehicles (yellow board) are regulated and assigned dedicated zones. Commercial operators are required to pay an aggregator fee per trip.

"The new parking and pick-up system at BLR Airport was thoughtfully introduced to address long-standing operational challenges at the arrival kerb—including unmanaged halts and congestion—and to deliver a safer, more orderly and dependable arrival experience for all passengers," a BIAL spokesperson said.

BIAL has also cited Bureau of Civil Aviation Security guidelines, which prohibit parking facilities within 100 metres of the arrival gate. This stretch is to be declared a no-honking zone, with the police directed to take immediate action against violators.

Around 20 BIAL staff have been deployed along walkways to assist passengers, including with luggage, and new signage has been installed.

CM urges Kerala to reconsider Malayalam Bill

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday asked the Kerala government to reconsider the proposed Malayalam Language Bill, warning that Karnataka would oppose it using every constitutional right if it is passed.

In a letter to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Siddaramaiah expressed serious concern that the Bill would make Malayalam the first language even in Kannada-medium schools, particularly in border districts like Kasargod, where many seek education in Kannada. He said language is central to identity and dignity, and urged Kerala to hold inclusive consultations with linguistic minorities, educators and neighbouring states to maintain harmony.

Siddaramaiah

'State to approach President'

Meanwhile, Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi said in Belagavi that a delegation led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar will meet President Droupadi Murmu soon to request her to not accord approval to the Malayalam Language Bill passed by the Kerala Assembly.

He said the delegation will convey to the President that the bill will affect the interests of Kannadigas living in the Kasaragod district of Kerala. Tangadagi said Kasaragod alone has a population of 7.5 lakh Kannadigas and there are 210 Kannada medium schools. Under the provisions of Article 350B of the Constitution, the state will urge the President to not accord approval to the bill, he said.

The MUV that rammed into a stationary lorry near Kora in Tumakuru taluk on Friday morning, killing four Ayyappa devotees on the spot. Three of the seven injured are said to be in critical condition. DH PHOTO

Four Ayyappa devotees killed as MUV rams lorry

TUMAKURU, DHNS: Four Ayyappa Swamy devotees, including a seven-year-old girl, were killed and seven others sustained injuries after an MUV they were travelling in crashed into a stationary lorry near Kora in Tumakuru taluk in the early hours of Friday.

The deceased have been identified as Maruthappa (45), Venkatesh (30), Gavisiddappa (28) and Sakshi (7). The injured Huligeppa (32), Sakshi's father, Srinivas (32), Pradeep Kumar (28), Rajappa (45), Rakesh (24), Tirupati (33) and Srinivas (32) , all natives of Kukanoor, Gadigeri Tanda and Kakkihalli Tanda in Koppal district.

The condition of Pradeep Kumar, Rajappa and Tirupati is said to be critical and they are shifted to a hospital in Bengaluru. The other injured are admitted to the district hospital, the police said.

The accident occurred when they were returning home after visiting Sabarimala. The devotees had left for Sabarimala in a Cruiser on January 5. After taking darshan, they left Sabarimala on the night of January 7. Pradeep Kumar, who was on the wheels, lost control and rammed the vehicle into a stationary lorry. The Kora police have registered a case and investigation is underway.

Air pollution affects India's 1,787 cities, but only 130 covered by clear air scheme

BENGALURU, DHNS: As many as 1,787 of 4,041 Indian cities are polluted but only 130 cities are covered under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), a satellite-based study from Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said.

The NCAP, launched in January 2019, started with tackling bigger particle (PM10) pollution in 130 cities in the first phase and targeted reduction of smaller particles (PM 2.5) in the second phase by 2025-26. A total of Rs 19,614 crore has been earmarked for the 130 cities and many of the states have utilised the funds.

Researchers from CREA looked into the satellite data to check the PM 2.5 pollution in 4,041 cities. PM 2.5 particles are linked to serious lung diseases, including cancer.

Details like aerosol optical depth, nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide concentration, weather data and other auxiliary datasets in a two-step modelling approach revealed a worrying picture.

A whopping 1,787 cities "consistently" breached the annual PM 2.5 levels set by National Ambient Air Quality Standards (40 microgram per cubic metre) in all the five years from 2019 to 2024. However, only 67 of these cities were covered under the NCAP.

"This implies that about 44% of all Indian cities remain in a state of chronic PM 2.5 nonattainment, with no year showing compliance during this period," the study said.

Interestingly, the 130 cities under NCAP were selected based on the historical pollution data from 2011-2015.

The 1787 polluted cities, most of them from north and central India, have not received any focus despite the serious health risk faced by their occupants.

CREA analyst Manoj Kumar said prioritising PM 2.5 and its precursor gases Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulphur Dioxide was necessary if India wants to tackle air pollution.

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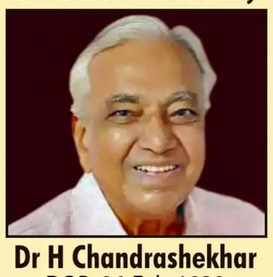
on her 6th Death Anniversary
Fondly remembered by the family

3rd Death Anniversary



Dr H Chandrashekhar
DOB. 06-Feb-1939
DOD. 10-Jan-2023
Wife - H Vanajakshi Shekhar

RGUHS to write to I&B Ministry to feature advertisements on drug addiction

VC stresses need to educate youngsters about the dangers of narcotics

BENGALURU, DHNS

Intent on ridding Karnataka of the drug menace, Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) will write to the Union Ministry for Information and Broadcasting (I&B) to feature advertisements or videos warning audiences of the perils of drug addiction at cinema halls.

RGUHS Vice-Chancellor Dr Bhagavan B C stressed the need to raise awareness about drug addiction among youngsters.

Pointing to awareness advertisements warning people about the ill-effects of tobacco addiction that precede screening of movies at cinema halls, Dr Bhagavan said, "We will write to the Union Ministry seeking addition of similar videos on narcotic substances as well."

RGUHS has already made a similar request to the Karnataka Transport Department, seeking advertising space at bus and Metro stations to educate people about drug-related problems.

"Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy was receptive to our ideas, and we will soon submit a final proposal on the subject," said the RGUHS VC.

RGUHS has constituted a task force to check use of narcotic substances among students at medical and nursing colleges. The task force comprises cops, teachers and student representatives. "The task force is required to submit a report once every three months. Starting this year, colleges must declare that their campuses are drug-free during affiliation," said Dr Bhagavan. Nearly 20-30% of students across the country were addicted to drugs, said the RGUHS VC citing various reports.

"Our university has launched the 'Nasha Mukth' campaign to check use of drugs. Our students have even made videos to raise awareness about the drug menace, and we'll ask each college to show these videos to students at least twice a week," said Dr Bhagavan.

'Student's death impelled me to fight'

Dr Bhagavan recalled the agonising episode of a student's death from drug addiction during his stint as a principal of a private medical college. "Despite our best efforts to wean him off drugs, he succumbed to addiction and the impact it had on his family, the pain they suffered and ultimately, the way he died, cannot be expressed. I decided then that I would fight the problem of drug addiction among students," he said.

RGUHS to shift to Ramanagara campus this year

BENGALURU, DHNS: RGUHS will move to its new campus in Ramanagara this year. The move to the new campus will be carried out in a phased manner.

Varsity officials confirmed that the land was free of litigation, adding that work was under way on quarters for housing the staff. "We are planning on starting the shifting process from March. In the first phase, we will shift the administrative unit to the new campus, but the examination section will continue to function from Bengaluru for some time in the interest of students," said VC Dr Bhagavan B C.

Of the Rs 600 crore sought by the government for the construction of medical colleges, the varsity has already paid Rs 300 crore, said RGUHS Registrar (Administration) Arjun Odeyar. "We are not transferring all the funds at once. We have kept Rs 300 crore in the varsity corpus to pay salaries, and retirement benefits to our staff," said Odeyar.

In a bid to generate revenue, the varsity has hiked the affiliation fee for colleges. However, the sudden and exorbitant hike has upset colleges.

"The affiliation fee was last increased in 2008. That's why the university increased it this year," Odeyar said.

Sri Siddaramaiah's initiatives guarantee prosperity

As much as Rs 1.12 lakh crores have been spent so far on the five guarantees announced by **Sri Siddaramaiah**, and with these ambitious schemes, as many as 72 crores have benefited, says **Nagaraju Ashwath**

A typical statement from a housekeeping employee in Belagavi can be seen in the words of Parvati, a daily wage earner. "It used to cost me Rs 1,500 per month to go to the city for work. Apart from this, my monthly electricity bill, children's education, house maintenance and other expenses were high. Since the launch of the 'Shakti Yojana', I have been going to Belagavi at no cost".

Smt Lakshmi Hebbalkar, Minister for Women and Child Development, Government of Karnataka, cited this as an example of a woman in Belagavi who has become self-reliant thanks to the saving in monthly expenses with the launch of the 'Gruha Lakshmi' and 'Gruha Jyothi' schemes.

Inspiring leadership

Smt Lakshmi Hebbalkar welcomed the implementation and progress made in the five guarantee schemes in Karnataka. All praise for Sri Siddaramaiah's governance, the minister said, "Sri Siddaramaiah has seen hardships since childhood. Having experienced the hardships of rural life, he has great concern and love for the weaker sections. In addition, he leads a disciplined life himself. He is especially committed to his principles and ideology. This is the reason behind his success and record in his political life. I have not seen Sri D Devaraj Urs. However, I have had the opportunity of interacting with Sri Siddaramaiah and working with him. Having worked closely with him, I have learnt a lot. He has the skills to stand strong without any compromises in politics. He did not get a chance to be the chief minister while in JDS. Later, when he joined the Congress, the party also gained a lot of strength from him".

Speaking on Sri Siddaramaiah's initiatives, Smt Lakshmi Hebbalkar said, "He comes from a difficult background and is implementing pro-poor schemes ever since he came to power. Apart from the projects implemented in his first term, the five guarantees of this term are helping a great many. 'Gruha Lakshmi, 'Gruha Jyothi', 'Shakti' and 'Anna Bhagya' revolve around women. They are focused on them. It is evident that Sri Siddaramaiah always works for the development of the masses. It is truly an honour to work in his cabinet"

Committed to education

Speaking on Sri Siddharamaiah's commitment to education, Sri Ramalinga Reddy, Minister for Transport and Muzrai, Government of Karnataka, said, "I was the education minister in Sri Dharam Singh's cabinet. Sri Siddaramaiah was the finance ministry then. Since those days, I have witnessed his professionalism, discipline and concern for the people. He would offer his full cooperation for all projects of the department. He had provided the necessary funds to extend the fresh meal scheme, which was only up to Class V at that time, to the rest of the school children too. He demonstrated his commitment to education by providing supplementary grants for the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan'.

On Sri Siddaramaiah's leadership, the minister added, "He always does as he says. His memory power amazes everyone. Recognised as an able leader, he continues to initiate more pro-people schemes. The five guarantee schemes in the State are more than just programmes. They have been recognised as revolutionary measures that have changed the lives of people. Thanks to the 'Shakti' scheme, employment opportunities have increased by 23 per cent in Bengaluru and 21 per cent in Hubballi. The 'Shakti Yojana' has supported many people, including garment workers and women engaged in housekeeping work. Also, the number of BMTC passengers in Bengaluru alone has increased by 1.50 million. This is impacting the turnover and employment benefits in this sector. Sri Siddaramaiah's visionary leadership has played an important role in ensuring that all the guarantees and projects in the State are pro-people.

Voice of the weaker sections

Speaking on the guarantees, K H Muniyappa, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Karnataka, stated, "We have been implementing the 'Anna Bhagya' scheme successfully in the State. This scheme, aimed at alleviating hunger of the poor, is Sri Siddaramaiah's first priority. I am happy that Sri Siddaramaiah, who is a voice of the weaker sections, has been the chief minister for a long time. The 'Anna Bhagya' scheme provides five kg of rice along with dal, sugar and salt, and with the 'Indira Kit'. The Congress government will always formulate schemes for the poor, and Sri Siddaramaiah's cooperation will always be the backbone of all these programmes".

Guarantee schemes contribute to economic growth

The five guarantee schemes have changed the lives of the weaker sections, writes Justice **Dr H N Nagamohana Das**, former High Court judge

For a State to move on the path of development, the government needs to take constructive decisions. The State government should respond to the needs of the people at the grassroots and improve their living standards. Only then will the State witness reforms.

The pre-independence administrations were limited to border protection, state expansion, rule, tax collection and administration. People had to live in extreme chaos. The infrastructure needs of the people received no attention.

The Constitution has created many avenues through which people's lives can be enhanced. The State government has taken many steps in line with this. The five guarantee schemes have changed the lives of the masses at the grassroots.

The schemes offer many benefits. A graduate should not suffer a financial crunch while looking for a job. If he is sustained with financial assistance while he is searching for a job, and is comfortable, he will try harder. And he will get a suitable job. He will go to work healthy and grow financially strong. When the youth become financially stable, it leads to the progress of the State and the country. Thus, a government scheme should contribute to the economy and take the State towards sustainability.

According to the Constitution, all should be treated equally. The progress of the country is possible through these schemes that change the lives of the weaker sections. Sri Siddaramaiah's leadership is effective on this path. Governments usually come under a lot of pressure. Amidst these pressures, pro-people governance should be continued. Welfare and guarantee schemes have worked like oxygen for the lives of the weaker sections at the grassroots level. It is not only Karnataka that has accepted these projects. Other States and the Central government have initiated them too it. These projects are contributing a lot to improving the living standards of the people at the grassroots.

Sri D Devaraj Urs cannot be compared with Sri Siddaramaiah. The conditions during their tenure are different. However, this government is efficient. There is a conducive environment for the prosperity of the weaker sections.

Guarantees have changed lives of crores of people

It's common to hear women at the KSRTC bus stand in Majestic saying gratefully that the free bus ride paved the way for them to come to the K R Market in Bengaluru every day to sell vegetables. The five guarantee schemes of this government have been very helpful for the weaker sections and working women in the State. The guarantees, which have been announced as ambitious schemes of the State government, have cost the exchequer Rs 1.12 lakh crores so far, and as many as 71.93 crores have benefited from them. These statistics prove that the guarantee schemes are not just promises, but are bringing positive changes in people's lives. These schemes extend from women's empowerment to financial security for the youth.

Here's a bird's eye view of their impact:

Gruha Lakshmi Scheme

The Gruha Lakshmi Scheme has become a lifeline for many homemakers in the State. According to data as on September 2025, 1.24 crore women of the State have registered for this scheme. The government has transferred Rs 57,381 crores directly to the beneficiary accounts towards this scheme. A sum of Rs 2,000 is transferred every month. The money has helped women in managing the family expenses.

Shakti Yojana

The Transport Department stated that according to the data received till January 2, 2026, the Shakti Scheme - free travel for women in KSRTC and BMTC buses - has been an unprecedented success, as so far, women have travelled free in buses 638 crore times. The government has released Rs 16,479 crores to the transport institutions for the management of this scheme. The Shakti Scheme has increased employment opportunities and mobility significantly among women.

Gruha Jyothi Scheme

As on November 2025, 1.65 crore power consumers in the State were receiving zero electricity bills under the Gruha Jyothi Scheme. The burden of paying for electricity has been removed from the list of monthly expenses among the weaker sections. The government has spent Rs 21,239 crores to fund this scheme.

Anna Bhagya Scheme

Aimed at a hunger-free State, the government is providing relief under the Anna Bhagya Scheme in two formats.

Direct cash transfer: A total of Rs 11,821.17 crores have been given in cash in lieu of rice to 72.02 crore beneficiaries till December 2024.

Foodgrain distribution: 21 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrains were distributed between February and November 2025, for which Rs 4,753.90 crores were spent.

Yuva Nidhi Scheme

The Yuva Nidhi Scheme for unemployed graduates and diploma holders reached 2.98 lakh candidates between December 2023 and November 2025. They have been provided with financial assistance while looking for a job. As much as Rs 874 crores have been spent on this scheme.

5 guarantees: Impressive figures of 2025

Gruha Lakshmi
Funds spent: Rs 1.24 crores
Beneficiaries: 57,381

Gruha Jyothi
Funds spent: Rs 1.65 crores
Beneficiaries: 21,239

Shakti Yojana
Funds spent: Rs 16,479 crores
Free rides availed: 638 crores

Anna Bhagya
(direct cash transfer)
Funds spent: Rs 11,821.17 crores
Beneficiaries: 72.02 crores

Yuva Nidhi Scheme
Funds spent: Rs 874 crores
Beneficiaries: 2.98 lakhs

Source: State Guarantee Implementation Authority

Schemes for government employees demonstrate his concern

Sri Siddaramaiah has implemented schemes that have benefitted government employees and their families, says **C S Shadakshari**, President, State Government Employees Association

Sri Siddaramaiah, who is deeply concerned about the welfare of the people of the State, has done a lot of good for government employees. He allocated Rs 10,530 crores in the 6th Pay Commission and Rs 17,000 crores in the 7th Pay Commission.

A scheme of Rs 1,500 for free treatment for each of 25 lakh government employees' families across the State was launched. The scheme was implemented last October. Earlier in 2014, free treatment for seven serious ailments was provided through the Jyoti Sanjeevini Scheme. Sri Siddaramaiah has always been recognised as a leader who looks after the welfare of government employees. I congratulate Sri Siddaramaiah for setting the record of being the longest-serving chief minister.

Best administrator the State has seen

The government, under the leadership of **Sri Siddaramaiah**, is committed to changing the lives of the weaker sections, says **H M Revanna**, Chairman, State Guarantee Implementation Authority

Many State governments that criticised the guarantee schemes when they were announced in Karnataka are now implementing the Congress initiatives. They realise these schemes work very effectively socially. These programmes, which help change the economic status of the weaker sections, are being successfully implemented.

The State government is committed to changing the lives of the weaker sections, and Sri Siddaramaiah's leadership attracts everyone's attention. Coming from a socialist background, he is the best administrator the State has seen. Sri Siddaramaiah is a popular leader who is leading the campaign against discrimination in grants to the State at the national level. He is an unparalleled politician who took on some policies of the Center with the campaign 'our tax, our rights. I am happy that he has surpassed the record of Sri D Devaraj Urs to become the longest-serving chief minister.

CM announces govt med college for Vijayapura

Inaugurates velodrome at Bhutanal, launches Rs 870 cr works in dist

VIJAYAPURA, DHNS

Responding to 115 days of strike by the Vijayapura Government Medical College Agitation Committee, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced on Friday that the state government will drop the proposed PPP model and instead establish the government medical college soon.

He was speaking after unveiling the statue of Kittur Rani Channamma and inaugurating a velodrome at Bhutanal and a series of development works worth Rs 870 crore.

Siddaramaiah said, "The indefinite protest opposing setting up medical college on PPP model, has come to my notice. There is no need to continue the protest as we have decided to drop the proposal to establish the medical college in Vijayapura on PPP model. It was a project formulated by the BJP government.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar offers ladoo to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during an event to felicitate the CM for breaking Devaraj Urs' 'longest serving CM' record, in Vijayapura on Friday. Industries Minister M B Patil looks on.
DH PHOTO

The government medical colleges are already functioning in 22 districts. In the remaining districts, including Vijayapura, the government will set up medical colleges, superspeciality hospitals and trauma centres," he said.

The agitation committee urged the CM to release the protesters and drop cases against 27 of them.

The chief minister assured Bijapur City MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal of providing a grant of Rs 160 crore for the construction of a flyover from Kanakadasa Circle to Shivaji Circle in the city.

Industries Minister M B Patil presented a silver statue of Basavanna to Siddaramaiah, who eclipsed D Devaraj Urs' record of 'longest serving CM', last Tuesday.

The minister also offered ladoo specially prepared at his home to the CM.

Addressing the gathering, Siddaramaiah said, "I have surpassed the late Devaraj Urs' record. He was CM for about 7 years and 239 days. I equalled it on January 6. This has been possible because of the blessings of the people and the Congress high command. Because of their support, I have been able to serve as CM twice and also become the longest-serving CM. I thank the people of the state for this."

Retired Justice Zakeria Yacoob (left) was felicitated with a memento after delivering a special lecture on 'Socio-Economic Rights Adjudication' on Friday at the Karnataka Judicial Academy.

Courts must scrutinise budgets for housing: South African judge

BENGALURU, DHNS

Justice Zakeria Yacoob, former judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, has called for a shift in judicial perspective toward reasonableness and human dignity when adjudicating socio-economic rights.

Delivering a keynote lecture at the Karnataka Judicial Academy (KJA) on 'Socio-economic rights adjudication,' Justice Yacoob emphasised that legal frameworks must prioritise vulnerable populations over mere statistical achievements.

The event was attended by Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru of the High Court of Karnataka and R V S Naik, senior advocate and president of Karnataka State International Commission of Jurists (KSICJ).

Drawing from the South African experience rooted in the struggle against the apartheid regime, Justice Yacoob highlighted that social and economic rights were not just policy matters but fundamental constitutional obligations.

He specifically referenced the landmark Grootboom judgment, which redefined the right to housing not as a mechanical guarantee of a structure, but as a right of access.

"The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources," Justice Yacoob noted.

He argued that courts have the power to scrutinise state budgets to ensure that a reasonable amount is allocated to essential needs like housing. He warned that if a housing policy only benefits the middle class while ignoring the poor and disabled, it fails the test of reasonableness.

Addressing the issue of evictions, he noted that South African law now mandates that evictions occur only when "just and equitable," fundamentally altering common law rights of ownership in favour of human rights.

'Inferior quality houses'

However, the former judge expressed grave concern over the "shameful" impact of corruption on public works. He lamented that houses built today are often of inferior quality compared to those built decades ago due to inflated tenders and lack of accountability.

"Corruption has taken over, and the houses being built now are of miserable quality," he stated, urging the legal fraternity to remain vigilant against such institutional failures.

BJP demands judicial probe, suspension of police inspector

HUBBALLI, DHNS

The BJP workers and leaders, led by R Ashoka and Chaluvadi Narayanaswamy, the Opposition leaders in Assembly and Council, respectively, staged a protest on Friday here, accusing the police of forcibly disrobing the woman party worker, after a video of the partially clothed woman in a police vehicle went viral recently.

Addressing the protesters at Ambedkar Circle in the city, Ashoka said, "Why are the police saying that the woman herself removed her clothes, without any inquiry?. Why is the chief minister saying the same thing without getting an inquiry report? It looks like the CM has given a message to the Police Department that the probe should go in a certain direction."

He demanded a judicial inquiry into the incident, and suspension of Police Inspector K S Hatti and other police personnel.

MLA Mahesh Tenginakai said the police treated the BJP worker, who was detained on charges of assaulting Congress corporator, badly, but shifted the corporator to the hospital while detaining her.

Fearing SIR, the Congress corporator threatened those who visited her ward for the mapping of voters, he added.

Meanwhile, the Congress leaders termed the entire episode a part of BJP MLA Mahesh Tenginakai's 'toolkit'. They released an old video of the woman in question beating a man.

CID probe into Hubballi disrobing case after CM's nod, says Parameshwara

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Hubballi case, where a woman alleged that the police disrobed her, will be handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) after receiving approval from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Home Minister G Parameshwara said on Friday.

"Discussions are ongoing. The CID has to probe the veracity of the incident and submit a report to the government. Then the government will see who is at fault and if there was any dereliction, and decide on the next course of action," he told reporters in Bengaluru.

The Opposition attacked the Congress government after the video of a woman, said to be a BJP worker, sitting inside a police vehicle partially unclothed, went viral recently.

The incident allegedly occurred during police action over a dispute related to the voter revision exercise in Hubballi.

Police have denied the charge, claiming the woman herself removed the clothes.

"Police did not allow the woman to be disrobed; they took immediate action. I have shared the information publicly that she did it herself. However, we are considering a detailed investigation. An investigation is necessary to know the clear facts," Parameshwara said.

He reiterated that "no one has interfered in our decisions."

"The chief minister and I discuss things and make decisions. I could have directly said that I would hand over the Hubballi case to the CID. But can such decisions be made without bringing it to the CM's notice?" he asked.

Don't Miss
Tomorrow's DH on Sunday

DH DECCAN HERALD

BIG PICTURE — Indian healthcare: A story of excesses.
BOOKS — A memoir of listening to the hills.
ART & PURSUITS — A silent assault on heritage.
WELLNESS — Pelvic health guide for the Gen Z woman.
TRAVEL — Are you ready for Kailash-Mansarovar?
FOOD & DRINK — A delish Malvani spread!

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
U R RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
HAL Airport Road, Vimanapura Post, Bangalore-560017
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
(Phone : 080 25084168, 4175, 4169) (Fax:080 25084155)
BRIEF CORRIGENDUM-I NOTICE

1. On behalf of President of India, item rate tender is invited for the following work.

Description	Details
Name of work	Replacement of Old Rolling shutters and trench covers at Central AC plant at ISITE Campus, URSC, Marathahalli, Bengaluru-560037
E-Tender Notice	URSC/C and MG/ACMD/0051/ETN-07/ 2025-26 Dt.12.12.2025
Estimated cost put to Tender	₹ 16.56 Lakhs
Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	Extended upto 17:00 Hrs. on 22.01.2026
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	₹ 33,120/- (Validity for 180 days)

2. Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details along with Hindi version in website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender documents from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO

Sd/-
Group Director (Construction & Maintenance Group)

CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HOSAPETE
No:6845/CMC/HPT/MF/Tender/2025-26Dated: 08.01.2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION (IFT) E-PROCUREMENT

2025-26th Municipal Fund Tenders are invited for the work mentioned below as per KTPP act 2000 in two cover system are invited from the Contractors/Firms registered in KPWD as mentioned below. in e-procurement the contractors / firms will have to upload all information, documents and rates etc., www.eproc.karnataka.govt.in 1) Tender Last Date: 21.01.2026. TIME :4.00 PM. 2) Opening for Technical Bid will be on Date: 22.1.2026TIME: 4.30 PM. 4) OPENING PLACE OF TENDER: CMC HOSAPETE. 1) DMA/2025-26/ SE6845 2) Name of the Work :Annual Man Power Contract for Supply of Valvemen of CMC Hosapete , 3) Estimated Cost Rs in (Lakh) 60.00 EMD Rs. 120000.00/- any other information required can be obtained from the office of the CMC Hosapete during the working hours

Sd/-Assistant Executive Engineer, CMC Hosapete **Sd/-Municipal Commissioner CMC Hosapete.**
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/452

ಬೀದರ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ | **BIDAR UNIVERSITY**
ಜ್ಞಾನ ಕಾರಂಜಿ ಹಾಲಹಳ್ಳಿ (ಕೆ), ಬೀದರ 585 414 ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಭಾರತ
Office of the Registrar Evaluation Section - E-Mail.registrarevaluationbidar@gmail.com
No. BUB/ACD/COMP/ /2025-26 Date : 09.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(E-Procurement two cover system)

The Bidar University, invites tender from eligible service providers for the Supply and installation of Desktop PC, Laptop, A4 Colour MFP, Projector and Scanners as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act. The tenderers who have registered under E-governance Department of Karnataka may participate through e-tendering system. The approximate estimated cost of the procurement is of Rs. 1.0 Crore. Tender documents may be downloaded from the E-Procurement Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** The eligible tenderers shall submit their proposal under e-procurement platform on or before 23.01.2026 **the dates as scheduled in the e-portal. For any more information contact the Registrar, Bidar University, 9449391184.**

Sd/- **Registrar**
Bidar University, Gnyana Karanji,
Halhalli (K)-585414, Bidar, Karnatkaa

Karnataka State Forest Industries Corporation Limited KSFIC Wood is good
(A Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
ISO 14001-2015 Certified Company
RMP Unit, "Vanavikas' 3rd Floor, 18th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore - 03
RM Direct : 080-23445646, e-mail:rmrmp.2008@rediffmail.com
No.: KSFIC/RM-RMP/FIREWOOD & PULPWOOD SALE/ CR-01/2025-26 Date:09.01.2026

e-TENDER NOTIFICATION

e-Tender is invited from the intended Industries/ Companies/ Individuals for purchase of Eucalyptus/Acacia Pulpwood and Firewood prepared by the RMP unit, KSFIC, Bangaluru. The details are as under :

1) Last date to receive the bid through E-Procurement is on **17.01.2026 upto 03:30 P.M. 2)** Interested persons have to pay EMD deposit at E-Procurement as per the detailed conditions laid in the notification **dated 09.01.2026**.

The Notification and other details can be accessed from **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** e-procurement help line No.080-46010000 & 080-68948777. Further details can also be had from the above Office during Office hours.

Sd/-
DIPR/CP/JA/ 4966/2025-26 **Deputy Conservator of Forest and Regional Manager, RMP Unit, Bangalore.**

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE, U.R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL Airport Road, Bengaluru - 560 017
(Phone: 080 25084184, 4156)
BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

Sl. No	Description	Details	
1	Name of work	Proposed Shed for BAS Model at URSC Main Campus, Vimanapura, Bengaluru- 560017.	Improvements and additions to existing vacant quarters at DOS / ISRO Housing Colonies (Domlur, Jeevan Bhima Nagar and Indira Nagar Newland), Bengaluru (Phase-VII) – Civil, PH & Electrical Works.
2	E-Tender Notice No.	URSC/C&MG/C/M/31/2025-26, Dt. 08/01/2026	URSC/C&MG/C/C/11/2025-26, Dt. 08/01/2026
3	Estimated cost put to Tender	₹ 24.25 Lakhs	₹ 413.80 Lakhs
4	Period of completion	Six Months	Eleven Months
5	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**₹ 48,500/- valid for 180 days**	**₹ 8,27,600/- valid for 180 days**

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details along with Hindi version in website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender documents from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.

Sd/-
Group Director, C&MG, URSC

FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
Office of the Commissioner,
No.8, Cunningham Road, Bangalore - 560052.
Phone No: 080-22343074, E-mail: hqa2com.fcs-ka@nic.in
No: CFS/EST-1/03/2025-26 Date: 09-01-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department invites short term e-Tender through e-Procurement Portal in Two Cover System from interested eligible bidders for **Outsourcing of Data Entry Operators, Drivers and Group-D at the Office of Commissioner, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department** for a period of one year extendable to another one year. Bidders can download the tender documents from e-Procurement Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 9-01-2026 to 19.01.2026** for further details.

Sd/- Head Quarters Assistant to Commissioner Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department, Bengaluru.
DIPR/CP/4954/ Adverto/2025-26

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Bengaluru South City Corporation, Jayanagar 2nd Block, Near Ashoka Pillar, Bengaluru
No.: ACF/BSCC/PR/48/2025-26 Date: 09.01.2026

TENDER CORRIGENDUM

Ref.: Short Term Tender Notification No.: AFC/BSCC/ TENDER/PR/01/2025-26, Dated: 03.01.2026

The dates specified in the tender called as per the mentioned advertisement dated 03.01.2026 in the office of the undersigned have been changed as follows due to technical errors.

1. RFT Reference No.: **BSCC/2025-26/SE0022 BSCC/2025-26/SE0019**
2. Date of commencement of Download of RFP Document from e-Procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in:** From **09.01.2026**
3. Last date and time for uploading online queries' in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal: upto **12.01.2026, 5:00 p.m.**
4. Date and time of Pre-bid Meeting: **12.01.2026** at **12:30 p.m.** Venue: **Office of the ACF, BSCC, 9th Cross, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Bengaluru - 560011**.
5. Last date and time for uploading of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal: up to **16.01.2026, 5:00 p.m.**
6. Date and time of online opening of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal: **17.01.2026, 5:10 p.m.**
7. Place of opening of RFP: **Online at Karnataka Public Procurement Portal.**
8. Address for Communication: **Office of the ACF, BSCC, 9th Cross, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Bengaluru - 560011. Email: acfbscc@gmail.com Phone: 7019464699**

All other terms and conditions in the original tender remains same.

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, Bengaluru South City Corporation

Government of Karnataka
RURAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY & SANITAION DEPARTEMENT, DIVISION, CHITRADURGA .
Phone No.: 08194-234488 e-mail: eerdwsd.chd@gmail.com
Tender Notification No: EE/RDWS&SD/CTA//Tender/ /2025-26/ 874/ Dt: 07.01.2026

Tender Notification
Through e-procurement

Tender has been invited for the following work in Single and Two cover system through kppp-procurement. Eligible tenders may obtain the details and tender documents and submitted the filled tender online through website view.http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Chitradurga and Hiriyur Taluks Total 07 Works, Rs. 114.15 Lakhs Last Date for Receipt of Bids Dt: 20.01.2026, Technical Bid Opening 21.01.2026 and Financial Bid Opening 23.01.2026 For Further details Office of Executive Engineer and also through e-port web site http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/ 590/2025-26 **Sd/- Executive Engineer RDWS&S Division, Chitradurga**

Government of Karnataka
Police Department
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE KALBURGI CITY
No.COP/ACT-3/STS/TW/14/25-26 Date: 07.01.2026.

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-procurement)

Commissioner Of police Kalaburgi City invites tender for Supply of Two-Wheeler Vehicles (Motorcycles/Scooters) for Kalburagi city With Accessories, KALBURGI Regarding Purchasing Two wheelers and Their Equipments For Kalaburgi City. Eligibility for bidders in bid system (Techno-commercial Bid & Financial Bid) in e-procurement mode for Details are available in the site : www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in Last date and time for upload of e-tender in E-procurement platform as follows.

1) Commencement of download of e-Tender Form from website- http//eproc.karnataka.gov.in: **No.COP/ACT-3/STS/TW/14/25-26,** 2) Tender Publishing Date: **08.01.2026 Time:5:30PM**, 3) Pre bid meeting: **13-01-2026 TIME:11:30AM,** 4) Last Date for Uploading of Tender in e-procurement platform on or before: **25-01-2026 TIME 5:00PM,** 5) Opening of Technical Bid: **27-01-2026 TIME 05:00PM**, 6) Opening of Price/Financial Bid: **29-01-2026 11:30AM** 7) Tender amount: **59,94,000=00**, 8) EMD Amount: 1,19,880=00, 9) Contact Address for communication: Commissioner Of police, Kalaburgi City, Kalaburgi Ph:08472-248500. **storeseckbc@ksp.gov.in**

Sd/- Commissioner Of police Kalaburgi City
DIPR/Kalaburagi/955/KSMC&A/2025-26

ಮೈಸೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ನೀಸ&ಒಚ (ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ) ವಿಭಾಗ, ವಾಣಿನೀಸ ಆವರಣ, ಯಾದವಗಿರಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು-570020
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಮೈನಪಾ/ಕಾಇಂ/ನೀಸ&ಒಚ(ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ)/ಸ.ಅ/ಟಿಎನ್-22/933/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:07.01.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ/ಪೂರ್ಣಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ

ಮೈಸೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ ವಿವಿಧ ಅನುದಾನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ KTPP ನಿಯಮಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿವರ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ	ವಿವರ	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ	ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಗಂಟೆ ಒಳಗೆ	ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ
				ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಚಾಲ್ತಿಗೆ ಬರುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ	ಟೆಂಡರ್/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ
1	kw-1, kw-2,kw-3 & Service Tender	07 ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಗಳು	160.90	12.01.2026	2701.2026	28.01.2026
2	kw-2	01 ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ	24.00	09.01.2026	16.01.2026	17.01.2026

ವಿಶೇಷ ಸೂಚನೆ: ಮುಂದೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ಸೂಚನೆ/ಬದಲಾವಣೆ/ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿಗಳಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಹೊರಡಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು
ನೀಸ&ಒಚ (ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ) ವಿಭಾಗ
ಮೈಸೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಮೈಸೂರು/1489/ಶಿರಡಿಸಾಯಿ/2025–26

HM rejects HDK's 'interference' charge

BENGALURU, DHNS: Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday rejected Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy's charge that Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar interfered with the functioning of the police.

Kumaraswamy has accused Shivakumar of interfering in the home department's affairs after he convened a meeting of police officers in connection with the Ballari violence.

"Shivakumar is a responsible minister. He's the Deputy CM. Kumaraswamy may be right in saying that the Deputy CM is also just a Cabinet minister and he doesn't have extra powers. But, as a government representative, he (Shivakumar) going there can't be termed as wrong. He has gone there with the responsibility of being a Cabinet minister and Deputy CM, as I couldn't go," Parameshwara told reporters.

Transfer Hubballi top cop: Bommai

BENGALURU, DHNS: Haveri MP Basavaraj Bommai on Friday sought the ouster of Hubballi-Dharwad Police Commissioner N Shashi Kumar, accusing him of covering up the alleged disrobing of a female BJP worker.

"The incident of a Dalit woman being disrobed is cruel and inhuman. That it happened by the police shows that the home department has lost control," Bommai charged.

"Are such police personnel fit to be in their jobs? Within hours of the incident, the commissioner tried to hush it up by saying there was no mistake by the police and that the woman was wrong. What the commissioner has tried to do is unforgivable...Does he think he can get away with anything?" Bommai asked.

Sugar factory blast: one more worker dies, toll climbs to eight

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The lone surviving worker in the Bailhongal sugar factory blast, who was battling for his life at KLE Hospital in Belagavi, succumbed to burns on Friday. With this, all eight injured in the explosion died in the mishap.

Raghavendra Giriyala (36), a native of Gokak, failed to respond to treatment and died on Friday morning. Eight employees had suffered severe burns following the explosion while replacing valves of Actuated Valve Control Packages (AVCP) were being replaced at compartment-1 at Inamdar Sugars at Markumbi village in Bailhongal taluk.

Three workers died on the day of blast on Wednesday. Four others succumbed to burns on Thursday while the lone surviving worker lost the battle for life on Friday.

The deceased workers are: Akshay Chopade (48) i, Deepak Munavalli (31), Sudarshan Banoshi (25), Gurunath Thammannavar (38), Bharath Sarawadi (27), Manjunath Kajagar (28), Manjunath Teradal (31) and Raghavendra Giriyal (36).

'Political jealousy', 'police failure' led to Ballari violence: Congress panel

Fact-finding committee submits report to KPCC chief

PRATHIMA NANDAKUMAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

A fact-finding committee of Congress has found that 'political jealousy' triggered the Ballari violence that claimed the life of Rajashekar, a party worker, on January 1.

The committee, headed by Guarantee Implementation Committee Chairman H M Revanna, submitted its report to KPCC President and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Thursday.

Revanna has also flagged "serious police lapses" in pre-empting and preventing the situation from escalating, while expressing concern over the growing menace of politicians hiring private gunmen, especially in Ballari district.

The Ballari violence was a fallout of the "political jealousy" of the BJP leaders against Congress MLA Nara Bharath Reddy, who had led and garnered huge support for the installation of the Maharshi Valmiki statue in the city, the committee said in the report.

The committee comprised Raichur MP Kumar Naik, Challakere MLA T Raghu Murthy, MLCs F H Jakkappanavar and Basanagouda Badarli and former MP Jayaprakash Hegde.

The committee members visited Ballari and reviewed the situation on January 3.

Rajashekhar was killed during the clashes between the supporters of Bharath Reddy and BJP MLA Gali Janardhana Reddy. The violence was triggered by a dispute related to putting up banners on the unveiling of the Maharshi Valmiki statue outside Janardhana Reddy's house. The flex boards were pulled down in vengeance and to provoke, the committee said in the report, which has still not been made public.

The Ballari police have filed multiple FIRs and arrested 26 persons from both political parties. The state government has rejected the BJP's demand for a CBI probe.

The government transferred DIG of Ballari range Vartika Katiyar and suspended SP Pavan Nejjur for alleged mishandling of the situation.

Bharath Reddy had led a grand procession (Pura pravesha) on December 25, held to receive the Valmiki statue, proposed to be installed at SP Circle in Ballari city. There was a huge turnout of 5,000 people, including the BJP supporters. Flex boards and banners were put up across the town and also outside Janardhana Reddy's (house) compound. But Reddy's supporters tearing down the Valmiki banners triggered the violence as Bharath Reddy's aide Satish Reddy and his men were assaulted by former minister B Sriramulu and Janardhana Reddy's supporters.

Janardhana Reddy was upset that local leader Sridhar Reddy, close to veteran BJP leader B S Yediyurappa, was now in Bharath Reddy's camp, the committee said in the report.

Another provocation was Sriramulu opposing the new statue and giving a call to boycott the event, as he had already installed a Valmiki statue, but on private property. The new statue, proposed to be erected on public land, was welcomed by all.

The report also indicated that the police failed to read the situation and said that prohibitory orders should have been in place as soon as the police learnt about the (flex) dispute.

The SP was posted very recently, and the IGP failed to avert the incident. The police were ill-prepared to control the situation, though the flex boards were pulled down earlier in the day, and the situation escalated and turned volatile by evening and resulting in the death of a Congress worker, the committee said.

Contrary to the BJP leaders' claim, the committee said that they were "ready" for a confrontation and had stocked lathis and chilli powder, which was evident in the videos gathered by the panel and now in the public domain.

The Congress workers were not armed, and it was the BJP leaders who provoked the Congress supporters. As soon as Satish Reddy was injured, his private gunmen opened fire in the air. Some eyewitnesses claimed that some shots were fired from the terrace of Janardhana Reddy's office too, and there are videos to prove the same, said the report.

Even as the committee admitted that there was firing from both sides, it considered it prudent to await the FSL report to ascertain whose bullet killed the party worker.

'Menace of hiring private gunmen'

A major concern raised by the panel is the growing menace of politicians hiring private gunmen, which it dubbed "Andhra style" security cover.

The situation in Karnataka does not warrant the use of private gunmen by any politician, not even ministers, as there is no threat and also because they are elected representatives expected to be among the masses. Flaunting the gunmen has become a fashion, and it is not due to any threat, said a senior member of the panel.

"If you are a people's representative, why should you indulge in hate or vindictive politics?" the member asked.

The report to be submitted to the state government has also recommended adequate compensation to the family of the deceased, a house and a government job to the deceased worker's sister (a widow), as he was the sole breadwinner of the family.

Trade talks stalled because Modi didn't call Trump: US

Trade talks, from Page 1

PTI, citing people familiar with the matter, reported that there was no occasion in the course of last year when a phone call could have helped seal the trade pact.

Lutnick's comments came after Trump stepped up the pressure for talks with a warning this week that tariffs could rise further unless India curbs its Russian oil imports. The failure to reach a deal has pushed the Indian rupee to a record low and spooked investors.

India is still seeking a tariff rate between Washington's offers to Britain and Vietnam that had formerly been agreed but the offer has expired, Lutnick added.

India is among the last major economies yet to seal a trade deal with the US. Trump imposed tariffs of 50% on Indian exports — the highest rate in Asia — in August in part over India's purchases of Russian oil.

The tariffs have soured ties between the longtime partners. The US President has also angered New Delhi with repeated claims that he brokered a ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

Didi takes to streets over ED raids, targets Shah

ED raids, from Page 1

Jagannath Sarkar is a BJP member in the Lok Sabha, while Suvendu Adhikari, who quit the TMC to join the saffron party in 2020, is now the Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly as well as a frontrunner for the party's chief ministerial candidate for the state elections, scheduled to be held by April-May this year.

The ED on Thursday conducted raids at 10 premises, six in West Bengal and four in Delhi, in connection with a case registered under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against a coal smuggling syndicate, which used to steal and illegally excavate coal from areas leased to Eastern Coalfields Ltd of West Bengal.

"What I did yesterday, I did as the TMC chairperson. I have done nothing illegal," Mamata said on Friday, adding: "If someone tries to kill me, don't I have the right to defend myself? If my party doesn't exist, how will I fight for the people?"

She reiterated her allegation that the ED had raided Jain's residence and the I-PAC office to take away documents related to the TMC's strategy for the forthcoming Assembly elections. "I first thought they had come to ask or check something. Then I realised they are taking away our party's documents and strategy details. That is why I rushed there," she said.

The TMC supremo also alleged that the BJP and the government had brought all the agencies like the ED and the CBI under its control and had been misusing them against the political opponents. She alleged that the BJP had manipulated its way to power in Maharashtra, Haryana and Bihar.

She wondered if the BJP leaders were thinking that they could capture West Bengal too in a similar way. "If someone tries to hit me politically, I get politically rejuvenated and reborn," she said during the rally.

Calling Mamata unconstitutional, senior BJP spokesperson Ravi Shankar Prasad said in Delhi that she had stopped the ED from functioning by interfering in their raid in the IPAC office in Kolkata.

Thanisandra demolitions aimed...

Thanisandra, from Page 1

A compound wall has been built around it. Nasir Ahmed, one of the residents, said: "That land is adjacent and belongs to a powerful minister."

Many residents echoed him, saying the demolition drive was aimed at facilitating access to the property.

The drive follows a similar operation in the nearby Kogilu Layout that left dozens of families displaced.

The crux of the dispute lies in a direct conflict between private ownership documents and state acquisition claims. Residents claim their occupancy dates back to the mid-1990s. They claim they possess registered sale deeds, have paid property taxes to the BBMP for decades, and hold legal utility connections.

Conversely, the BDA asserts the land was officially notified for Arkavathi Layout in 2004. According to the agency, any subsequent private sale or construction on this land is unauthorised.

According to the BDA, the clearance is the result of a two-decade-long legal process. The land was part of the Arkavathi Layout project, with the preliminary notification issued on February 3, 2003, and the final notification on February 23, 2004. The BDA claims possession was first taken in November 2004, and that the original landowners have already accepted compensation.

The high court's orders in 2014 and 2021 reaffirmed the BDA's rights over Arkavathi Layout. The court-appointed Keshavanarayan Committee reviewed the claims of 33 site owners who alleged they had purchased the land legally. On February 16, 2023, after hearing the matter, the committee declared the sales illegal and directed the BDA to take possession.

The BDA alleges that the structures cleared were "illegal sheds" rather than primary residences. They claim the site owners were not living there but were instead collecting rent from third parties on BDA-owned land.

BDA officials claim they arranged shelter for the evictees at a nearby community hall, deployed mobile toilets and provided food and water.

Many residents questioned the claim, saying many evictees are sleeping on the road, with food provided by NGOs.

B K Ravi new VC of BNU

BENGALURU, DHNS: Senior professor of Bangalore University B K Ravi has been appointed as the vice chancellor of Bengaluru North University (BNU).

Governor and Chancellor Thawarchand Gehlot on Friday issued an order in this regard.

Ravi was serving as the vice chancellor of Koppal University, and his term was supposed to end in March 2027. Following the order, Ravi took charge at BNU on Friday evening.

Governor returns internal reservation Bill to govt

Quota Bill, from Page 1

This internal reservation will be considered during recruitment and admissions to state-run educational institutions.

Sources said that Gehlot has asked the government to clarify on concerns raised by SC (Left) leaders, including Chitradurga BJP MP Govind Karjol, that the 6-6-5 formula will create confusion in promotions and other service matters.

Also, the 59 'most backward' SC castes have opposed the 6-6-5 formula as they have been put under Group C alongside Lambanis, Bhovis, Kormas and Korchas. These nomadic SCs are seeking a separate 1% quota.

Gehlot has also returned to the government Shree Chamundeshwari Kshetra Development Authority and Certain Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, in which a Group A senior scale officer of the Muzrai department will be appointed as the secretary of various temple authorities. Apparently, a section of KAS officers has objected to this.

Lok Bhavan said it received a total of 22 Bills, of which 19 were approved and sent to the government for publication in the gazette.

The contentious Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill "is under consideration", the Governor's office said.

The Opposition BJP and JD(S) have opposed the Hate Speech Bill, and urged Gehlot not to approve it.

Sathyu, Jayamala to get lifetime achievement awards

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government on Friday announced the list of Lifetime Achievement Awards presented for cinema for the calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Senior actor and politician Jayamala, known for award-winning movies like 'Thaayi Saheba', and producer Sa Ra Govindu were conferred with the Dr Rajkumar Lifetime Achievement Award for the years 2020 and 2021, respectively.

Legendary filmmaker M S Sathyu, known for his groundbreaking cinema — 'Garm Hava', 'Chithegu Chinte' and 'Bara' among others — has been named as the recipient of the Puttanna Kanagal Award, the lifetime achievement award given to film directors. The 2021 recipient of the award is K Shivarudraiah. The Dr Vishnuvardhan Award, presented for lifetime contribution to Kannada cinema, was presented to still photographer Pragathi Ashwathnarayan and senior actor-producer M K Sundar Raj.

'JD(S)-BJP will win 150 seats'

BENGALURU, DHNS: JD(S) Youth leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy on Friday expressed confidence of JD(S)-BJP alliance winning 150 seats in the next assembly elections.

At an interaction with reporters, organised by Bengaluru Press Club, he said, "In the upcoming Assembly elections, the NDA alliance of JD(S) and BJP will win more than 150 constituencies. Both parties are working together in that direction."

Countering the recent statement by DCM D K Shivakumar over JD(S) merger with BJP, Nikhil said, "Keep our party's story aside. Where does Congress stand in Bihar? How many digits has it come down to? Not just Bihar, in many other states Congress has lost seats."

SOUTH INDIAN Bank Date: 08.01.2026

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

CANTONMENT BRANCH
#10, Infantry Road Cross, B. M. Complex, Opp. Blue Cross Chambers, **Shivajinagar, Bangalore 560 001. Ph: 080-46005898**
Email: br0009@sib.co.in, www.southindianbank.com

The Gold Articles pledged under the following number/s at Bangalore Cantonment Branch, which are not cleared by payment of Bank's dues even after serving registered notice and Gold articles pledged under same number against which registered notices have been served/returned undelivered, will be sold in **public auction or private treaty on as is where is condition** at Branch premises as under or any other convenient date and time without further notice at the risk and responsibility of the pawners, if they are not released from the branch.
Auction of Gold ornaments pledged under the following accounts will be held at Branch premises on 21.01.2026 at 4.00 P.M Branch : Cantonment, Shivajinagar, Bangalore.

Sl. No.	Name	A/c No.	Gross Wt (in gms)
1	ANWAR ZAKI SHAIKH	0009653000061524	111.5

Bank reserves its rights to cancel/ adjourn the auction without giving any reason at any time. *Sd/-* **Manager**
Corporate Office Regd. Office: SIB House, T B Road, Mission Quarters, Thrissur, Kerala - 680001
Telephone Number : + 91-487-2420020, Fax Number : + 91-487-2420020, E-Mail : sibcorporate@sib.co.in, Website : www.southindianbank.com. Corporate Identity Number: L65191KL1929PLC001017

ICAR-National Institute of Animal Nutrition and Physiology
Adugodi, Bengaluru-560 030
Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Government of India

NIANP/ADV-01-CDN/2026

The walk - in - interview has been scheduled on **30.01.2026 (Friday) at 10.30 AM** at this Institute for the selection of **One Young Professional - I** under **ITMU** on temporary basis. The consolidated remuneration is Rs.30,000/- per month. For detailed advertisement please visit the Institute website **www.nianp.res.in.**

S/d
I/c Admn. Officer

IREL (India) Limited
Formerly Indian Rare Earths Limited
(A Government of India Undertaking)
CIN: U15100MH1950GOI008187 Website: www.irel.co.in
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018 Company

Ref: ADVT.No.25-26/15 Date: 06-01-2026

TENDER NOTICE

IREL (India) Limited, Chavara invites Bid for the following items / job descriptions.

Event No. (GeM)	Job / Item Description
GEM/2026/B/7075674	Request for proposal for selection of agency for Procurement, supply, transportation, dismantling, Erection and commissioning of Pre HUS facility at IREL (India) Limited, Chavara of Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC)

Bidder may download tender document from https://www.irel.co.in or https://gem.gov.in website. Any corrigendum / extension to above tenders shall be hosted in above websites only.

CBC 48139/12/0015/2526 **Sd/- Head, Chavara**

JHARIA REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DHANBAD

e-Procurement Notice

Tender Reference No: JRDA/CIVIL/25-26/35/ Date: 01.01.2026

1.	Name of Work	**Annual Cleaning and Sanitation Work for 3 Years at Phase-I, Belgaria Township, JRDA (2nd Call)**
2.	Estimated Cost	Rs. 2,14,10,195.00
3.	EMD	Rs. 4,28,300.00
4.	Tender Document Cost	Rs.10,000.00
5.	Time of Completion	3 Years
6.	Date/Time from which bid is available for online bidding	03.01.2026 at 03:00 PM
7.	Last Date/Time for on-line submission of bids	17.01.2026 at 5:00 PM
8.	Date and Time of Bid Opening	19.01.2026 at 11:30 AM
9.	Name and Address of Officer inviting tender	Head of Department (Civil), JRDA, Dhanbad Hatia More, Golf Ground Road, Hirapur, Dhanbad - 826001 Jharkhand, India Email: infojrda.dhn@gmail.com

Note : 1. Only e-tenders will be accepted.
2. Further details can be seen on website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Sd/-
Head of Department (Civil),
JRDA, Dhanbad

PR 370395 Rural Development(25-26)#D

ARC OF 5W WALKIE-TALKIE & 25W VHF SET OF LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No.: SNT-36-LMG-2025-26; Dated: 05-01-2026; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Name of work :** ARC of 5W Walkie-Talkie & 25W VHF set of Lumding Division for Three years. **Tender Value:** ₹17,82,374.50/-, **Bid Security**: ₹35,700/-; Date & time of **closing** of tender at **15:00** hours and **opening** at **15:30** hours on **28-01-2026**. Complete information alongwith the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website **www.ireps.gov.in**

DSTE, Lumding
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

E-Tender Notice No. 03-TENDER-ELCON-CKP-25-26, dated 08.01.2026. e-Tender is invited by Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Con), S.E.Railway, Rourkela-769013 for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work : **Brief Description of Works :** "Supply, erection, testing & commissioning of 25KV OHE for Sini yard modification and Kandra yard modification in connection with 3rd line & 4th line work between Sini and Kandra section of Chakradharpur Division". **Cost:** ₹ 20,58,46,542/-. **Bid Security :** ₹ 11,79,200/-. **Completion period** : 24 (Twenty four) months. **Due Date :** 09.02.2026. Interested tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/ description/specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these items will be accepted. **N.B. :** Prospective Bidders may regularly visit **www.ireps.gov.in** to participate in all other tenders. **(PR-1045)**

कार्यालय कार्यपालन यंत्री (भवन) लोक निर्माण विभाग, सम्राट चौक, सिविल लाईंस, सीधी (म.प्र.)
PHONE No - 07822-297539 E-mail:-piusidhi@gmail.com

एन.आई.टी. नं. जेमा 2025/B/7056994, 7057046, 7057093, 7057108 सीधी, दिनांक:–30/12/2025

निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन निविदा पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों अथवा पंजीयन हेतु उपयुक्त पात्रता वाली प्रतिष्ठित फर्म से आमंत्रण की जाती है:–

स. क्र.	पोर्टल टेण्डर क्र.	कार्य का नाम	जिला	ठेके की अनुमानित राशि (पी.ए.सी.) (रू. लाख में)	अमानत राशि (ई.एम.डी.) (रू में)	ठेकेदार फर्म की श्रेणी	कार्य पूर्ण करने का समय
1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
1	GEM/2025/B/7056994	जिला सीधी (म.प्र.) के आदिवासी विभाग अन्तर्गत 03 नग उ.मा.वि. के 08 अतिरिक्त कक्ष के भवन (जूरी, उमरिया एवं कमछ) के प्रत्येक भवन में स्मार्ट क्लास रूम एवं फर्नीचर स्थापना कार्य	सीधी	157.17	556392.00	शासन के अन्तर्गत पंजीकत निर्माता (OEM)/प्रदायकर्ता	02 मांह
2	GEM/2025/B/7057046	जिला सीधी (म.प्र.) के आदिवासी विभाग अन्तर्गत 02 नग उ.मा.वि. के 08 अतिरिक्त कक्ष के भवन (चिगनवाह एवं लुरघुटी) के प्रत्येक भवन में स्मार्ट क्लास रूम एवं फर्नीचर स्थापना कार्य	सीधी	123.64	370927.00	शासन के अन्तर्गत पंजीकत निर्माता (OEM)/प्रदायकर्ता	02 मांह
3	GEM/2025/B/7057093	जिला सीधी (म.प्र.) के में आदिवासी विभाग अन्तर्गत 50 सीटर सीनियर बालक छात्रावास भवन पतुलखी के भवन में स्मार्ट क्लास रूम एवं फर्नीचर स्थापना कार्य	सीधी	46.56	164841.00	शासन के अन्तर्गत पंजीकत निर्माता (OEM)/प्रदायकर्ता	02 मांह
4	GEM/2025/B/7057108	जिला सीधी (म.प्र.) के बहरी में राजस्व विभाग अन्तर्गत संयुक्त तहसील भवन बहरी में साउण्ड सिस्टम, प्रोजेक्शन सिस्टम, और कम्प्यूटर की व्यवस्था एवं मरम्मत कार्य	सीधी	28.37	72130,00	शासन के अन्तर्गत पंजीकत निर्माता (OEM)/प्रदायकर्ता	02 मांह

1 निविदा से संबंधित बिड डॉक्यूमेंट वेबसाईट http://gem.gov.in पर बिना भुगतान के देखे एवं डाउनलोड किये जा सकेंगे।
2 निविदा अमानत राशि का मूल्य ऑन–लाईन पोर्टल पर क्रेडिट/डेबिट/कैशकार्ड/इंटरनेट बैंकिंग के माध्यम से भुगतान कर निविदा प्रपत्र खरीदा जा सकेगा।
3 निविदा प्रपत्र केवल ऑन–लाईन दिनांक 31/12/2025 समय 09:00 से दिनांक 29/01/2026 समय 18:00 तक खरीदा जा सकेगा। सूचना व अन्य जानकारी वेबसाईट पर देखी जा सकती है।
4 निविदा से संबंधित समस्त आवश्यक संशोधन उपरोक्त वेबसाईट पर ही दर्ज किये जायेंगे, पृथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

कार्यपालन यंत्री (भवन)
लोक निर्माण विभाग, सीधी

(G-24168/25)

भारत सरकार
कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय
त्वरित कॉर्पोरेट समापन प्रसंस्करण केंद्र (सी-पेस),
आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वी मंज़िल,
प्लाट P-6,7,8, से.-5, आई.एम.टी. मानेसर, गुडगाँव,
हरियाणा - 122050.
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

सत्यमेव जयते

Government of India
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE)
IICA Building, 7th Floor,
Plot P-6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar,
Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050.
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

FORM No. STK –6
PUBLIC NOTICE
[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice: ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2025-26/1711 Date: -06/01/2026

Reference:
In the matter of striking off or removal of names of ***(10)*** companies in the state of Karnataka under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S No	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AB9714530	U72900KA2020PTC134371	TOPBRAIN TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AC0037765	U74999KA2018PTC119703	MAATRIKOOTA SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
3	AC0946027	U62099KA2023PTC175199	VINDART INFOSOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
4	AC1012242	U33301KA1999GOI025573	HMT WATCHES LIMITED
5	AC0679605	U85100KA2024PTC186593	PRECIOUSMIND ACADEMY PRIVATE LIMITED
6	AB8835481	U63090KA2017PTC099667	TRAVELSPICE NOW PRIVATE LIMITED
7	AC0010627	U62099KA2025PTC197276	AMALGAMATED DATA SYSTEMS PRIVATE LIMITED
8	AB9346091	U72200KA2010PTC056374	REINDEER SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
9	AC0175169	U70200KA2019PTC120989	MUNAN VENTURES INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
10	AC0237917	U74140KA2005PTC036037	V4 MANAGEMENT SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED

2. Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/ have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.
3. Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.
4. Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

Irkan Tirkey
Deputy Registrar
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit

CBC 07123/11/0591/2526

DECCAN HERALD
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Silence as statement of compliance

India's response to the United States' attack on Venezuela and the capture of President Nicolas Maduro was long on caution and bordered on acceptance. New Delhi struggled to articulate a response and when it came, it was formal and bland. In a carefully worded statement, the government expressed "deep concern" over the developments, but avoided naming the US or condemning the aggression. It reaffirmed support to the well-being and safety of the people of Venezuela, and called upon all concerned to address issues through dialogue, ensuring "peace and stability of the region". Considering that the US action violated international laws and flouted the UN charter, India's response was underwhelming. It is noted that the government had also failed to voice strong condemnation of other recent acts of aggression, such as the war in Ukraine and the genocide in Gaza.

The position revealed a lack of clarity in responding to a transgression that is set to have fallouts beyond the Americas. India has a history of condemning aggression by strong powers on weaker nations. It has stood for morality, decency, and respect for national sovereignty, and endorsed a principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. But the world has seen significant changes over the last few decades, and India appears to have adjusted its sails to suit the winds. Now, it is not high ideals but immediate interests that guide the country's conduct and shape its responses to global events. India is increasingly seen as taking a realistic position on such matters. Important countries of the Global South, including South Africa, Brazil, and Mexico have condemned the attack on Venezuela. Though India is a leader of the Global South and has a voice that counts on the international stage, it has desisted from provoking the US.

India's position, or lack thereof, on the US offensive signifies a drift from ideals to interests

This reaction has to be seen in the context of a reiteration of the tariff threat by Donald Trump. The US president wants India to stop buying Russian oil and has okayed a bill that prescribes a 500% tariff on countries that buy oil from Russia. This move, if enacted as law, will severely impact India; it threatens to put an end to the country's exports to the US. The uncertainty around the trade deal the two countries are negotiating has not been cleared. Trump has also made some uncomfortable remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India's response reflects a new diplomatic rationale that sees being right as coming at a price.

Reclaiming ESZ a vital course correction

The Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowered Committee (CEC)'s recommendation to withdraw a 2020 notification which diluted the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) around the Bannerghatta National Park (BNP) is not merely an administrative reversal; it is an ecological necessity. The notification had brought down the total area under the ESZ, from 268.96 sq km to 168.84 sq km, removing protection from about 100 sq km of the buffer zone. By seeking the restoration of the wider ESZ that was proposed in the 2016 draft, the Committee has reaffirmed a basic principle of conservation: buffers exist to protect core ecosystems from precisely the kind of pressures that Bengaluru is now exerting. The BNP, together with three wildlife sanctuaries in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, forms a contiguous forest complex of about 3,000 sq km. It harbours about 100 elephants seasonally and has three corridors that connect the Karadikkal-Madeshwara, Tali-Bilikal, and Bilikal-Jowlagiri ranges. The rollback led to resorts, stone mining, and farmland conversion. What was once a transitional landscape meant to absorb urban shockwaves turned into conflict zones, pitting wildlife against human settlements.

Restoring the buffer zone will, no doubt, be an arduous task. Over the years, several structures have come up in the zone, often with official clearances. Demolitions will inevitably raise humanitarian concerns, particularly for the small landholders who acted in good faith. Yet the tension between compassion and compliance cannot be resolved by ignoring the law. Regularising illegality sets a dangerous precedent and shifts the long-term ecological cost onto society at large, specifically those who bear the brunt of human-wildlife conflict. The CEC report is also likely to place some of the proposed infrastructure projects under scrutiny.

Central panel's recommendation must hasten restoration of the critical BNP buffer zone

Compensatory afforestation has been offered as a panacea, but it is a poor substitute. Planting trees on degraded land elsewhere, often as monoculture, does not recreate the site-specific ecological functions of Bannerghatta's buffer. Elephant corridors, once lost, cannot be replanted like saplings. Fences, trenches, and other measures funded through compensatory schemes are reactive attempts to confine wildlife after their living space has been taken away. The central panel is right in holding that proximity to urban development cannot justify curtailing ecologically critical areas. Restoring the ESZ will be disruptive, but continued dilution will have irreversible consequences. Karnataka has repeatedly attempted to redraw eco-sensitive boundaries around other forests, and the Bannerghatta case should serve as a clear warning against such short-sighted, regressive interventions. Growth cannot come at the cost of ecological collapse.

A STRATEGIC DIVIDE

Washington's China reset leaves India exposed

America's commitment is now conditional. India must prioritise self-reliance in deterring its neighbour

BRIGADIER ANIL RAMAN (RETD)

The December 2025 release of the United States National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Pentagon's China Military Power Report highlights a widening divergence in American strategy, with serious consequences for India. Both identify China as the primary strategic competitor. The NSS reflects domestic priorities, transactional logic, and political restraint, while the Pentagon stresses urgency, timelines, and military preparedness.

Recent US actions, such as decisive intervention in Venezuela reflecting territorial prioritisation, and President Donald Trump's statement on January 8 that Xi Jinping considers Taiwan "to be a part of China and that's up to him what he's going to be doing," show this divergence is no longer just bureaucratic. These actions reflect a deeper doctrinal shift towards accepting great-power spheres of influence, sharply raising the risks for partners like India.

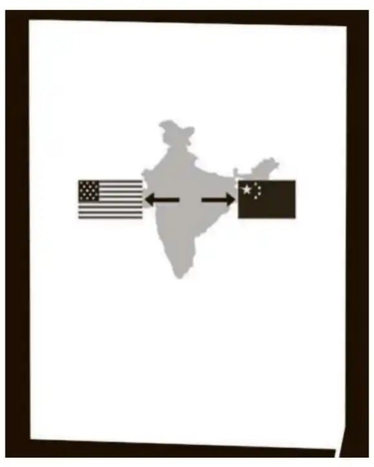
Across three administrations, US policy towards India has moved from diagnosis to diffusion, and then to forced realism. The 2020 Pentagon report identified China as a revisionist power and India as a strategic balancer, but avoided specifying timelines for potential conflict or India's exposure along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The 2023 framework diluted focus through "integrated deterrence," celebrating partnership but leaving US responses to Chinese pressure ambiguous. The 2025 report restores urgency but puts the primary burden of deterrence on India, signalling reluctance to guarantee support in a crisis.

A fourth phase is emerging under Trump: personalised sphere management. Commitments are framed not as institutional obligations but as leader-dependent judgments. For India, this brings a deeper layer of uncertainty.

The Pentagon confirms that China applies deliberate, calibrated pressure on India to prevent deeper US-India alignment. Beijing now calls Arunachal Pradesh a "core interest", along with Taiwan and the South China Sea. China wants to stabilise tensions tactically along the LAC while keeping pressure below the level that would prompt US intervention.

China's military capabilities continue to expand rapidly: a nuclear stockpile projected to exceed 1,000 warheads by 2030, long-range precision strike systems, early-warning counterstrike satellites, and growing PLA reach across the Indo-Pacific. China's readiness for "national total war" underscores its intention to escalate if necessary. India faces this growing power with weaker US security guarantees. Key vulnerabilities include India's military asymmetry, exposure to information warfare, frequent cyberattacks, and ongoing economic coercion, all of which threaten national autonomy.

Trump's Taiwan remarks signal to Beijing that calibrated, patiently managed coercion is unlikely to trigger escalation from the US. This lowers the threshold for sustained grey-zone pressure against India, especially during US political transitions.



The gap between political intent and military assessment is wider now. The NSS frames China mainly as an economic competitor and emphasises "muscular restraint." The Pentagon, by contrast, describes China's preparations for high-intensity conflict, including hypersonic weapons, sixth-generation aircraft, and whole-of-nation mobilisation. This is no longer just caution versus alarm. Trump's moves in Venezuela and his Taiwan remarks show a political logic that separates "our sphere" from "theirs". The Pentagon's realism cannot offset political leaders who withhold deterrence. For India, this means stronger US military ties may not guarantee political support in a crisis.

The NSS seeks "improved commercial relations with India" to encourage New Delhi's contribution to Indo-Pacific security. Instead of supporting India's rise as a China balancer, the US now expects India to contribute first as a condition for stronger ties.

The US expects India to deter Chinese aggression along the LAC and in the Indian Ocean. However, while the potential loss of control over maritime points such as the Malacca choke-point could impact trade, a Ladakh incursion represents an immediate threat to territorial sovereignty and national security. This contrast underscores why continental deterrence remains decisive.

The Venezuela case shows that geography plays a central role in US intervention thresholds. The US acted decisively within its own hemisphere while signalling tolerance for coercion in other regions. India is expected to manage deterrence along the LAC largely without US support, despite China's expanding military posture.

The Quad remains a platform for coordinating technology, supply chains, and maritime awareness. It is not a security guarantee. The Pentagon is cautious on the Quad and recognises its limitations. There is no collective military response or formal commitment to defend India. This leaves a critical risk gap. This ambiguity increases India's vulnerability.

In a sphere-of-influence world, this ambiguity is structural, not accidental. Drawing a parallel with the 1930s' "Far Eastern Munich" analogy, we see how aggressors have historically exploited unclear commitments to advance their agendas. Beijing understands there is no automatic US military response and calibrates pressure accordingly.

India's imperative

Beijing is likely to see American retrenchment and hemispheric prioritisation as an opportunity. Grey-zone coercion along the LAC and in the Indian Ocean will intensify as China's defence spending, already $304–377 billion in 2024, continues to grow.

Trump's remarks on Taiwan remove any remaining illusion of predictability. If Taiwan's fate depends on who is in the White House, India must assume zero certainty during crises. Strategic autonomy is no longer ideological; it is an operational necessity.

India must therefore accelerate defence industrial sovereignty, prioritise LAC-specific capabilities, negotiate transactional reciprocity with the US, and diversify partnerships with Europe, especially France, Germany, Israel, Japan, and Australia. Maritime strength matters, but continental deterrence is decisive.

The 2025 US strategy replaces solidarity with conditional cooperation and burden-shifting, now reinforced by Trump's implicit acceptance of spheres of influence. As China prepares for a protracted confrontation, India faces greater risk without dependable external guarantees. The US partnership remains useful, but no longer foundational. India must plan for a world where great powers tolerate each other's coercion as long as it remains geographically contained. Strategic autonomy is no longer a choice; it is the price of survival.

(The writer is a research fellow at the Takshashila Institution)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Scroll, sip, repeat

The challenge was deciding which brew deserved the empty stomach

SUNITHA MURALIDHARAN

The reels I scroll through say, "Drink this on an empty stomach to improve digestion." Another declares it will reduce hair loss, and yet others make similar promises. Since I was particularly interested in stopping myself from leaving DNA trails through my shed hair--crime committed or not--I got hooked.

Then, I noticed there was another solution for the same issue, and then another, until I was drowning in prescribed potions. Thanks to algorithmic recommendation systems, I am now officially in a relationship I never actually signed up for.

Invariably, the creator of the reel dramatically points downwards with their index finger to indicate that the ingredients are listed in the captions below. We all know what that is like -- it feels like unlocking a treasure chest, since the miracle potion components are usually hidden like precious gems. Even after applying every existing brain cell, the items that are supposed to work magic are impossible to decipher. When I was a novice scroller, I tilted my head left and right, squinted to read the micro-mini font in pale letters encoded in mystery. Later, as a scroll maestro, I learnt that I didn't need to adjust contrast or sharpen focus--just take a screenshot and zoom in. A forensic expert would be proud of the effort and progress I made.

The next step, of course, is attempting to make the magic drink or toner, as the case may be. With health drinks, the challenge was deciding which one to consume on an empty stomach, since most cures demanded pride of place as the first thing in the morning. I eventually made a timetable to give each one a fair chance.

I also learnt to label leftovers, since there is always the risk of the morning drink turning into a hair mask. I learnt this the hard way and considered myself lucky it wasn't the other way around. Given the ingredients are usually curry leaves, fenugreek seeds, turmeric, chia, fennel seeds or amla, it probably wouldn't have done too much harm,

After trying most of these miracle brews with little result, I arrived at a simple conclusion: drink water because you are thirsty; eat your meals because you are hungry; and add these ingredients where they actually belong.

Our parents and grandparents never needed miracle detox drinks because their kitchens were already wellness labs--minus the hashtags.

Turmeric was in the *dal*, ginger in the tea, *jeera* in the *tadka*, lemon juice in the spinach curry and so on. I cannot fathom why I followed advice of a man urging my hair strands not to submit their resignation, when his scalp resembled a solar panel.

Yet, amind all the herbal garden burps, I did find comfort in one thing: the reels normalise our problems and reassure us emotionally that we are not alone in our struggles.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

State government must sustain its menstrual hygiene initiative

I refer to 'From napkins to cups: Karnataka revamps menstrual hygiene scheme' (Jan 9). The Karnataka government's plan to distribute menstrual cups to girls in classes 6-12 from the next academic year is a commendable step. While the effort aims to make menstruation more cost-effective and environmentally friendly, it will also help girls from lower-income families adopt hygienic practices without incurring additional expenses. The government's proposal to hold awareness sessions in schools on using menstrual cups will help girls understand menstrual health better and make informed choices. The challenge now before the government is to take the initiative to the grassroots, reach marginalised and rural girls, and sustain the awareness programme until there is a behaviour change at the societal level.
Hridya, Bengaluru

Cost of quick delivery

The tragic death of a young delivery partner in Hyderabad earlier this week is a haunting reminder that our convenience is being bought with blood. The pressure to meet "instant" delivery deadlines forces gig workers into life-threatening risks on chaotic roads. We must stop prioritising speed over human lives. Aggregator platforms must be held accountable for the predatory algorithms that turn city streets into deathtraps.
Bhumi Avinash, Bengaluru

Who is accountable?

It is unfortunate that the poor continue to pay for official negligence. The recent demolition of 22 houses by BDA officials in Thanisandra has rendered several families homeless, raising serious concerns about administrative negligence. While prior notice may have been given, no alternative housing or rehabilitation was arranged, leaving residents displaced overnight. However, the root cause of the issue remains unaddressed, and the heavy burden has unfairly fallen on the poor.
Suhasini Thapa Mangar, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Top 10 finish in Olympic medal tally a non-negotiable national goal.

Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Sports Minister

As for the future, your task is not to foresee it, but to enable it.

Antoine de Saint Exupery

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

Hybrid *parampara*: *Nritta* in the age of AI

Technology can help enhance training and preserve the classical tradition without diluting the human craft

DIVYA NEDUNGADI

Artificial Intelligence is weaving its way into Indian classical dance and stirring up a lot of debate. As someone who performs and researches, I see critics and artists push back, saying AI just doesn't have the cultural or spiritual depth needed to truly get the heart of this art form. In the Guru-shishya *parampara*, it is not just about teaching steps; it is about passing down tradition, energy, and emotion through real human connection. This spiritual and cultural flow, critics fear, is disregarded by technological intervention, leading to scepticism among the practitioners.

I disagree with this generalised perception. While AI development relies heavily on data sets, the foundational texts of Indian classical dance offer immense possibilities for this conversion. Here is where it gets interesting, though. Ancient texts such as the *Natya Shastra*, *Balaramabharatam*, *Sangeeta Ratnakara*, *Hastalakshana Deepika*, and *Bharatarnava* are already so detailed and organised that it's easy to turn them into data sets. Our dance pedagogy leans heavily on these texts; so bringing in AI feels less like a threat and more like an upgrade. AI tools can make training and evaluation sharper than ever. We're not cutting out the human side; we're boosting it. This moment represents a larger shift in how Indian knowledge systems can meaningfully engage with emerging technologies, where preservation and innovation are not opposing forces, but complementary pursuits.

Sure, platforms like Google Meet let teachers reach multiple students at once, but the Guru-shishya tradition demands a personal touch – something you just can't automate. Still, AI with Augmented and Virtual Reality can help fill that gap. Imagine getting instant, personalised feedback on your hand positions, footwork, or expressions. It's like having a virtual Guru – it's like how Krishna could be with his many devotees at once, but now, it's tech doing the heavy lifting.

Pure dance, or *nritta*, with its intricate footwork and gestures, is already getting digitised everywhere. Using advanced tools such as Computer Vision, Deep Learning, and algorithms such as Media Pipe and Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), researchers can achieve high-accuracy identification of these movements. For instance, models have shown a clarification accuracy of up to 97.8% for complex *samyuta hastas* (double hand gestures), demonstrating AI's strong ability to process and analyse intricate geometrical patterns in dance. Such developments also create new possibilities for documentation, archiving, and comparative study, ensuring that rare stylistic lineages and regional variations are recorded with scientific precision for future generations.

But when it comes to *abhinaya* – the part that expresses emotion and draws out *rasa* – things get more personal. Traditionally, only the Guru's eye could judge *abhinaya*, and it happened in the private space of the *kalari*. Now, Motion and Precision Training (MPT) tech uses AI to give students real-time feedback on posture, symmetry, and gestures. AI won't ever replace the Guru's wisdom, but it does ramp up a student's technical skills and opens up access for people all over the world.

Deepening without disruption

Machine Learning is taking this even further. By tracking tiny muscle movements in the face, ML can measure how well a dancer expresses the *bhava*. This means students can get constant, around-the-clock feedback and focus on refining those subtle expressions that matter most. This democratisation of access has the potential to nurture talent beyond traditional cultural hubs, allowing students from diverse geographies and socio-economic backgrounds to engage deeply with classical forms.

But here's the big question: Can AI, which deals in numbers and patterns, really pick up on the regional quirks and subtle hints – the *dharmis* and the *dhwanis* – that make *abhinaya* so special? An evaluation that is only technically accurate but lacks the comprehension of these subtle human concepts can result in an aesthetically hollow appreciation.

I believe that AI's role is one of optimal expansion, not replacement. The real future is in blending both worlds, a hybrid tradition where technical skills and AI insights work hand in hand, but always under the watchful eye and taste of a Guru. For this to work, artists, tech experts, and critics need to come together and set some ground rules. With the National Education Policy 2020 making space for Performance Studies in the Indian Knowledge Systems, universities have to step up and lead this research.

Only by working together can we use technology not just to save our heritage, but to keep it lively and forward-looking in the digital age.

(The writer is an assistant professor at the Department of Fine and Performing Arts, GITAM University)

The Umar Khalid case

From Rule of Law to Rule of Instinct

SANJAY HEGDE

In 1964, the United States Supreme Court was asked to define obscenity. The case, Jacobellis v. Ohio, arose from the screening of *The Lovers*, a French film by Louis Malle that offended local sensibilities in Ohio. The judges struggled. Definitions collapsed under scrutiny. Finally, Justice Potter Stewart abandoned the attempt. Hard-core pornography, he said, might be impossible to define, "but I know it when I see it."

The line became famous because it was honest. It admitted that the law had reached the edge of language and fallen back on instinct. It was also deeply unsettling. It replaced a legal standard with a judicial feeling. A more unsettling film than *The Lovers* was probably Jean Renoir's *The River*, shot in India, filled with adolescent desire, glances that linger too long, and a quiet eroticism that never quite declares itself. The discomfort lies not in what is shown, but in what is felt. Which is why comedians joke: obscenity is whatever arouses a judge.

What disturbs or excites is personal. One judge's art is another judge's offence. Stewart's formulation worked not because it was principled, but because principle had failed. What is worrying today is the sense that Indian bail jurisprudence is drifting into the same territory. Bail is increasingly denied not by clear, repeatable legal standards, but by something closer to instinct. Not "I know obscenity when I see it," but "I know danger when I feel it."

The recent Supreme Court judgment refusing bail to Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act illustrates this drift. The judgment is long, careful, and studded with constitutional language. Article 21 is acknowledged repeatedly. Prolonged incarceration is recognised as a concern. But each acknowledgement is followed by a retreat. Delay, we are told, is not a trump card. Incarceration, however long, does not automatically offend liberty. Statutory rigour must prevail unless detention becomes so excessive as to shock the constitutional conscience. That formulation sounds balanced. In practice, it empties Article 21 of real force.

The core of the judgment lies in its handling of the "prima facie true" standard under Section 43D(5) of the UAPA. The court insists it is not conducting a mini-trial. Yet it accepts the prosecution's narrative almost in full. Speeches, meetings, associations, and ideological positions are woven into a story of conspiracy. The emphasis is not on proved acts, but on inferred design. Bail is denied not because guilt is established, but because the allegations evoke fear. The riots were serious. The social consequences were grave. The idea of coordinated unrest unsettles. And, because it unsettles, continued custody feels justified.

Now, place this next to the court's approach in the Amtek Auto money laundering case, where bail was granted to a promoter accused of large-scale financial fraud under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. Here, too, Parliament has imposed strict conditions. Here, too, the allegations involve hundreds of crores, layered transactions, and a sprawling evidentiary record. Yet the tone is entirely different. Prolonged incarceration, the court says, cannot turn into punishment. Trial is nowhere in sight. Evidence is documentary and already seized. Article 21 applies regardless of the nature of the offence. Liberty must prevail.

The contrast is striking.

In one case, delay is contextual, almost incidental. In the other, it is decisive. In one, statutory rigour is treated as a moral shield for the State. In the other, it yields readily to constitutional concern. In one, the accused must wait until detention becomes nearly grotesque. In the other, the State must justify continued custody.

What explains this divergence? It is not the text of Article 21. It is not even the text of the statutes. What changes is the emotional register of the case. Economic offences, however large, rarely trigger the same visceral reaction as allegations of riots, protests, and threats to public order. One frightens in the abstract. The other frightens in the street.

This is where Potter Stewart returns. Bail denial begins to resemble obscenity law: difficult to define, but instantly recognisable to the judicial eye. I know danger when I see it. I know the threat when I feel it. The Supreme Court often warns against mechanical bail jurisprudence. It speaks of "contextual balancing" and "accused-specific assessment." These phrases sound reassuring. But without firm anchors, they become invitations to unstructured discretion. Context becomes mood. Balance becomes instinct.

For trial courts and High Courts, this is a serious problem. Should prolonged incarceration tilt the balance towards liberty, or is it merely an unfortunate by-product of serious allegations? Does Article 21 actively restrain special statutes, or does it intervene only in cases of near-hopeless delay? How much fear is enough to justify continued custody?

The answers are not found in doctrine. They are sensed. This is not how precedent is meant to function. Precedent is supposed to discipline discretion, not legitimise it. When two Supreme Court judgments, applying the same Constitution, pull in opposite directions without acknowledging the tension, lower courts are left guessing which instinct is safer.

When bail decisions turn on the perceived moral or political valence of the allegation, equality before law weakens. Liberty becomes contingent not on necessity, but on narrative. Those accused of offences that provoke social panic face an invisible, higher threshold. Those accused of financial wrongdoing encounter a calmer judicial conscience.

Bail is not meant to be a referendum on a judge's fear. It is meant to answer a limited question: Is custody necessary to secure a trial, prevent interference, or protect the process of justice? When fear replaces that inquiry, bail ceases to be law and becomes temperament. Potter Stewart's famous line was an admission of failure. The court could not define obscenity, so it candidly retreated into subjectivity.

If bail jurisprudence is heading in the same direction, the least we can demand is similar honesty. If bail is to be denied because a case scares a judge, we should say so openly. We should stop pretending that we are applying neutral, transferable standards. Because once bail becomes a matter of "I know it when I see it," the rule of law quietly gives way to the rule of instinct. And liberty, like obscenity, is left to the mercy of the judge.

(The writer is a senior advocate designated by the Supreme Court of India. The views are personal.)

LIBERTY ON TRIAL

February 2016
Umar Khalid is arrested over alleged "anti-national" slogans made after an event at Jawaharlal Nehru University

March 2016
- Delhi court grants bail to Khalid
- The case becomes a flashpoint in debates on free speech, nationalism, and dissent

August 13, 2018
Khalid narrowly escapes an attempt on his life

February 23-25, 2020: Communal violence erupts in northeast Delhi, leaving over 50 dead

September 14, 2020:
- Khalid is arrested by the Delhi Police, charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), IPC, and Arms Act
- Police allege he was part of a conspiracy to incite violence during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act

April 2021
- Trial court grants bail in a separate riot-related FIR (FIR 101/2020)
- Bail denied in the main conspiracy case under UAPA
- Prosecution claims speeches, meetings, and digital material show intent to destabilise the state
- Defence argues evidence is circumstantial and criminalises dissent

July 2021: Khalid files for bail before the Sessions Court

2020 DELHI RIOTS CASE: Court cites role as alleged architects of
Delhi riots: SC junks Umar, Sharjeel bail pleas
Khalid, Imam on 'different
UAPA vs long incarceration
"This is my life now", Umar

2022

March 24: The court rejects bail application

April 29: Delhi High Court decides to hear both Khalid and Imam's appeals together

October 18: Delhi High Court rejects Khalid's plea for bail.

December 12: Khalid is granted a week-long bail to attend his sister's wedding.

2023

April 6: Khalid files a Special Leave Petition (SLP) in the Supreme Court against the Delhi High Court's decision that rejected his bail in October 2022.

2024

February 14: Khalid withdrew his petition from the Supreme Court

May 28: Khalid applied for bail at the trial court after he withdrew his petition from the Supreme Court, application rejected

July: Khalid again approaches High Court

December: Khalid was granted a seven-day interim bail to attend a marriage in his family.

> The sovereignty, integrity, and security of the nation, as well as the preservation of public order, are not abstract concerns; rather, they are constitutional values which Parliament is entitled to protect through law. Where a special statutory framework has been enacted to address offences perceived to strike at these foundations, courts are duty-bound to give effect to that framework, subject always to constitutional discipline... Individual liberty must be protected, but it must also withstand the legitimate demands of national security and collective safety. This balance is not a matter of preference; rather, it is a matter of constitutional duty.
>
> **Justices Aravind Kumar and Justice N V Anjaria**
> Supreme Court of India
> January 5, 2026

2025

September 4: Delhi High Court rejects bail for Khalid and eight other accused

September 10: Khalid again approaches the Supreme Court

September 22: The Supreme Court issued notice on Khalid's bail plea.

December 11: Delhi's Karkardooma court grants interim bail to Umar Khalid to attend his sister's wedding

2026

January 5: The Supreme Court denies bail to Khalid

DH ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

The science behind smog-eating surfaces

Aisiri Amin writes on the pros and cons of coating surfaces with photocatalytic materials to reduce air pollution

Air pollution levels in Delhi have spiked to 20–30 times above the levels recommended by the World Health Organisation, prompting widespread public concern. To address it, the government is pursuing "smog-eating" surfaces, among other measures, such as cloud seeding and the installation of anti-smog guns on high-rise buildings.

Smog contains a mixture of volatile hydrocarbons, ozone, oxides of nitrogen and sulphur, and particulates. Here, air pollution is caused by both photochemical reactions involving sunlight, unburned hydrocarbons, and nitrogen oxides, and high concentrations of particulate matter, primarily from car exhaust, construction dust, and biomass burning. It creates a dense haze that reduces visibility and can cause eye, nose, and throat irritation, respiratory problems, and cardiovascular disease.

Earlier this month, Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa announced several pollution control plans, including a focus on "smog-eating" surfaces, for which the government has signed an MoU with IIT Madras. These will be public surfaces coated with photocatalytic materials, such as titanium dioxide (TiO_2), that degrade pollutants.

An aerial view of Delhi being covered in smog. PTI/FILE

How does it work?

"Photocatalytic materials are basically semiconductors," says Dr Pardeep Singh, professor and head at the School of Advanced Chemical Sciences, Shoolini University. "Substances like TiO_2 or zinc oxide are typically used as photocatalysts. When light falls on these semiconductor catalysts, electrons within them jump from one energy level to another, creating a hole. These photocatalytic holes and electrons subsequently form free radicals, which have strong oxidising properties and can break down certain air pollutants with which they interact," he explains.

The main constituents of smog include nitric oxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, and particulate matter (PM). When these interact with photocatalytic materials, some gaseous pollutants—especially nitrogen oxides—can be converted into less harmful compounds, such as nitrates, or decompose into ions, a process known as pollutant mineralisation.

This is new to India, but not to the world. In the Netherlands, photocatalytic concrete coatings were used to reduce local nitrogen oxide (NO) concentrations in the air, rather than greenhouse gas concentrations. In 2017, scientists in Italy developed a type of photocatalytic cement that absorbs pollutants and converts them into harmless salts. Palazzo Italia in Milan, which opened in 2015, is one of the first buildings to use this cement.

"Photocatalytic materials get activated under primarily UV light (and to a lesser extent visible light), so in places where there is less sunlight, there might be an issue, but otherwise they could play a limited, localised role in reducing smog in Delhi," Singh says.

Impact on health

He adds that researchers typically test these materials under very harsh conditions. "And if they stand up to those conditions, only then do we claim that the photocatalyst is ready for use in the real world.

How efficient are photocatalytic coatings? Dr Ashish Moon, from Smt. Radhikatai Pandav College of Engineering, Nagpur, estimates that, although this depends on environmental conditions, TiO_2 can locally reduce certain gaseous pollutants such as nitrogen oxides under ideal conditions, rather than absorbing "up to 50%" of all harmful gases. He adds that, when used properly, titanium dioxide does not release harmful gases. He co-authored a 2021 paper titled *Detailed Case Study on Smog-Eating Tile.*

"It's better to use it in liquid form than as a powder. I haven't come across any harmful interactions between TiO_2 and particles or gases in the air," he adds.

However, he cautions that the efficiency of this method depends on atmospheric conditions. "How it works in Delhi depends on the weather conditions and the atmosphere. There should be enough UV light for the nanoparticles to activate," he says.

However, Sasho Gligorovski of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and his team found that photocatalytic paints can release nanoparticles and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) over time due to surface degradation. Their study showed that while indoor photocatalytic paints containing TiO_2 decreased nitrogen oxides, they also generated high levels of nitrous oxide, a harmful indoor pollutant.

Singh acknowledges the risk associated with photocatalysts and says it can be reduced by immobilising them on another surface. "Organic or inorganic supports such as activated carbon, graphene, and silicates can help reduce the release of harmful byproducts," he says. He adds that ZnO or TiO_2 photocatalytic materials are generally less toxic in bulk form and are therefore used in products such as sunscreen lotions.

However, activists and experts have expressed concerns about this, arguing that the reliance on chemical solutions may exacerbate pollution if not carefully regulated.

Not an immediate solution

Both Singh and Moon feel that photocatalytic coatings should not be seen as a standalone solution. "We have to focus on both prevention and cure. The attention needs to be on tackling vehicular and industrial emissions," Singh says.

Moreover, the impact may not be immediate, he adds. "You can't expect results within one or two days. After identifying the surfaces and applying the treatment, we will need to analyse the resulting changes. This will take at least one to two years," he explains.

He notes that photocatalytic materials, such as TiO_2, may not be able to degrade airborne dust. "If particulate matter contains oxides of nitrogen and sulphur adsorbed on its surface, then the photocatalytic material may work on them. But if particulate matter is only made up of sand or inert dust, then photocatalytic materials won't be able to degrade it."

Photocatalytic coatings have not shown significant improvements in air quality in some previous studies. A 2023 study from a Spanish city found that although this measure showed potential under controlled conditions, it yielded only a modest reduction in ambient NO_2 when implemented in real outdoor urban settings. The authors also added that the implementation costs were much higher than the damage costs saved.

DID YOU KNOW?

A new way to measure obesity

New research by the University of Sheffield and the University of Nottingham has found that the waist-to-height ratio (WtHR) is a more accurate and reliable indicator of age-related obesity risk than BMI, which can mislead older people and those with less muscle mass into believing they are not at risk of obesity.

The waist-to-height ratio, on the other hand, is a lot easier for people to understand and remember than more complex BMI categories, particularly in children. A good indicator of a healthy weight is if your waist measures less than half your height. The WtHR provides a better representation of visceral fat, which is stored around the abdomen and exerts greater effects on internal organs, which is why it is more important for health.

Analysing the obesity trends in England between 2005 and 2021, they compared the BMI alongside other waist-related measures, including the waist-to-height ratio.

Waist-to-height ratio is a lot easier for people to understand and remember than more complex BMI categories, particularly in children. People can easily check their own risk with a measuring tape. If your waist is less than half your height, that's a good indicator you're at a healthy weight.

"BMI is a well-understood measure. However, it could be misleading for people, particularly older people and those with less muscle mass, into thinking they are not at risk of obesity," said co-author Laura Gray from the University of Sheffield.

Unlike BMI, which tends to rise through middle age and then decline later primarily due to muscle loss, the WtHR continues to increase steadily, better reflecting how obesity-related diseases such as heart disease, stroke and dementia could increase in older adults.

"Our findings show that increases in obesity have been largely driven by environmental changes over time, not just individual behaviours, which means we need broader systemic action with policymakers addressing the food environment," she said.

The likelihood of obesity also increases with age, suggesting that an ageing population could further increase the prevalence. "If we under-diagnose obesity in older adults because we're relying solely on BMI, then this could mean we fail to identify large proportions of people who are at high risk and can benefit from healthcare interventions," she added.

Asked whether WtHR is used in India, Gray told *DH*, "While there is quite a bit of evidence for the use of waist-to-height ratio in children in Indian populations, there doesn't seem to be much research in this area on older adults."

The study has appeared in the *International Journal of Obesity*.

- Kalyan Ray

Introduce 'Romeo-Juliet' clause in Pocso act to save genuine relationships: SC

Says HCs cannot order mandatory medical age determination at bail stage

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre to introduce a 'Romeo-Juliet' clause to exempt 'genuine adolescent relationships' from its stringent provisions, after noting rampant misuse of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N Kotiswar Singh also declared that the high courts cannot order mandatory medical age determination of victims at the stage of bail in cases under the Pocso Act.

"Considering that repeated judicial notice has been taken of the misuse of these laws, let a copy of this judgment be circulated to the Secretary, Law, Government of India, to consider initiation of steps as may be possible to curb this menace inter alia, the introduction of a Romeo-Juliet clause exempting genuine adolescent relationships from the stronghold of this law; enacting a mechanism enabling the prosecution of those persons who, by the use of these laws, seek to settle scores, etc," the bench said.

Setting aside an Allahabad High Court order, the court held that the high court's direction of medical age determination of victims at the stage of bail exceeded the jurisdiction under Section 439 (grant of bail) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

The bench ruled that the high courts cannot use their bail jurisdiction to conduct 'mini-trials' or issue mandatory investigative protocols that contradict existing laws.

'Age matter of trial'

"The determination of the victim's age is a matter for trial, and the presumption which is accorded to the documents enumerated under the Section has to be rebutted there, for that is the appropriate forum to do so, not the bail court," said the bench.

The matter arose out of a challenge by the Uttar Pradesh government against an Allahabad High Court order granting bail to an accused in a sexual assault case, involving a minor girl.

While granting bail, the high court issued a slew of directions, including that in every case under the Pocso Act, police must conduct a medical age-determination test at the outset.

The court, which set aside the high court judgement, however, left the part of the order granting bail as "undisturbed".

Railway minister announces 52 reforms in 52 weeks for 2026

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday said Indian Railways has embarked on an ambitious reform roadmap for 2026 titled '52 weeks, 52 reforms'.

Under this project, one major reform will be implemented every week across key functional areas such as customer service, maintenance, production, quality management, health systems, and operations, he said.

After addressing the gathering after conferring 70th Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar, Vaishnaw said Indian Railways must move to an entirely new level to realise the vision of Viksit Bharat, Viksit Railways by 2047.

Congratulating railway employees for their dedication, he said their collective efforts have enabled Railways to overcome long-standing challenges, expand capacity, improve efficiency, and deliver major infrastructure and operational milestones.

He said a series of structured workshops are being conducted to redefine standards, identify bottlenecks, and set clear, time-bound action plans, with active participation from officers across departments.

Railway Board Chairman Satish Kumar spoke about continuous improvements through modern signalling systems, electronic interlocking, elimination of unmanned level crossings, and related safety measures.

Sabarimala tantri arrested in gold-heist case

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

In a major development in the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple gold heist, the temple's tantri (traditional head priest), Kandararu Rajeevaru, was arrested on Friday.

The special investigation team (SIT) summoned the tantri to Thiruvananthapuram and effected his arrest after quizzing him. He was later produced before a court in Kollam and remanded in police custody. Ten accused have already been held in the case.

The SIT found that Rajeevaru colluded with the other accused by giving permission to carry out gold-plating of the door frames of the sanctum sanctorum and the Dwarapalaka sculptures.

Despite knowing that taking the temple objects outside its premises violated the shrine's rituals, Rajeevaru did not report it or complain about the action.

The SIT also found that Rajeevaru had close connections with the key accused, Bengaluru-based Malayali Unnikrishnan Potti. Others accused were learnt to have given statements in this regard.

Rajeevaru, who told reporters he was innocent, earlier maintained that he gave only the ritualistic permission for removing the gold platings for repair work, but did not know that they were being taken out of temple premises.

Former Travancore Devaswom Board chairman A Padmakumar earlier said that a "god-like person" and a "vegetarian" was involved in the row, triggering speculations that he was referring to the tantri.

Rajeevaru is a senior member of the Thazhamon Madom, the family of tantris of the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple. Incidentally, his arrest came while the Sabarimala pilgrimage was progressing, with just a few days left for the "Makaravilakku" on January 14.

Meanwhile, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has also registered a case in connection with the alleged money-laundering involved in the Sabarimala gold heist.

Chhattisgarh: 63 Naxals surrender, 36 of them with Rs 1.19 crore bounty

DANTEWADA, PTI: As many as 63 Naxalites, 36 of them carrying a collective bounty of over Rs 1.19 crore, surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district on Friday, a senior police official said.

The cadres, including 18 women, turned themselves in before senior police and Central Reserve Police Force officials here under 'Poona Margem' (from rehabilitation to social reintegration) initiative, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai said.

The Naxalites said they were also impressed by the state government's surrender and rehabilitation policy, he said.

They were active in south Bastar division, west Bastar division, Maad division in the state, and in areas bordering Odisha, he said.

Seven of the cadres carried a reward of Rs 8 lakh each, he said.

These Naxalites have been identified as Paklu, alias Pradip Oyam (45), who was the secretary of the Kalahandi area committee of Maoists; Mohan, alias Azad Kadti (32), a divisional committee member; his wife Sumitra, alias Droupati Chapa (30), Bhairamarh area committee secretary; Hungi, alias Radhika Lekam (28), platoon party committee member; Sukhram Tati (20), member of Company no. 1; Pandu Madkam (19), member of Company no. 7, and Somdu Kadti (21), who was also a member of the same wing.

All the 63 surrendered Naxalites will be provided an immediate assistance of Rs 50,000 each and will be further rehabilitated as per the government's policy, he added.

MISCELLANY

COMICS

Blondie

Hagar The Horrible

Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

Marvin

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RIHLW

AWLOL

UNBYTO

LERVID

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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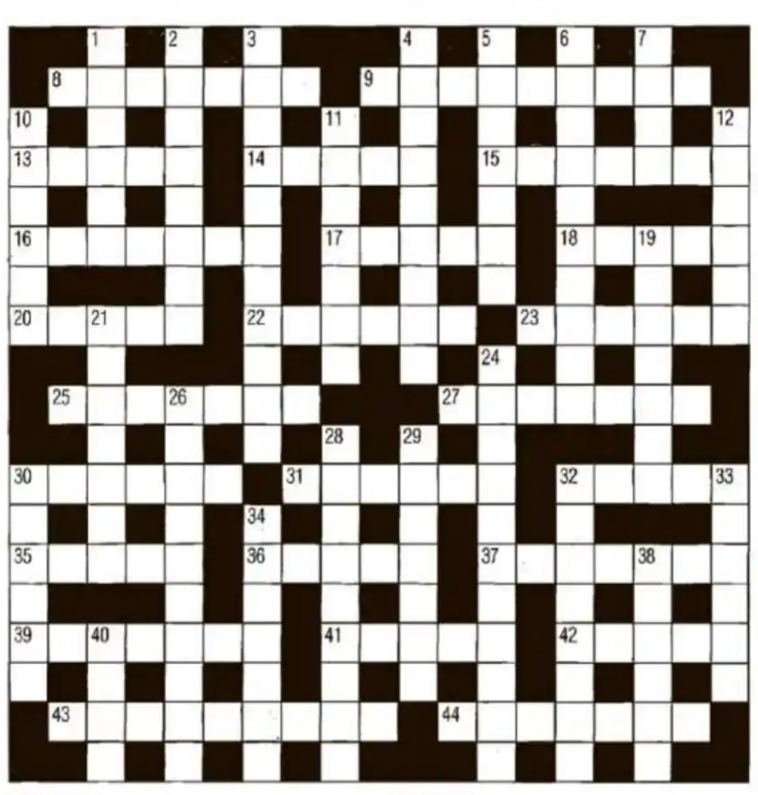
Answer here: "" (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's | Jumbles: STASH ONION PUDDLE DIVINE
Answer: Bifocals were becoming as popular as Ben Franklin — HAD ENVISIONED

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 4022



ACROSS
8 Live together (7)
9 Alternatively (9)
13 Lariat (5)
14 Humorous (5)
15 Exact (7)
16 Down payment (7)
17 Claw (5)
18 Nettle rash (5)
20 Alloy (5)
22 Bottle (6)
23 Well-known (6)
25 Farm vehicle (7)
27 Conifer (3,4)
30 Be present at (6)
31 Decapitate (6)
32 Essential (5)
35 Spiny plants (5)
36 Rigid (5)
37 Hairy (7)
39 Trailblazer (7)
41 Cuban dance (5)
42 Stadium (5)
43 Oil (9)
44 Boring (7)

DOWN
1 Tittle-tattle (6)
2 Merry-go-round (8)
3 Polygraph (3,8)
4 Type of painting (5,4)
5 Answer (7)
6 Beloved (10)
7 Italian wine (4)
10 Transparencies (6)
11 Ceramics (7)
12 Population count (6)
19 Extreme (7)
21 Inconsistent (7)
24 Anorak (11)
26 Unit of length (10)
28 Belittle (9)
29 Scent (7)
30 Take (6)
32 Word-for-word (8)
33 Room for manoeuvre (6)
34 Flightless bird (7)
38 Handy (6)
40 Burden (4)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
8 Say no more and concede it's superficial (7)
9 Uncomfortable in someone else's house? (3,2,4)
13 It indicates a f-fight (5)
14 The other is heartened by it (5)
15 Fruit bats (7)
16 Go ahead or go back to the page before (7)
17 Only reason, you say, for being in the red (5)
18 The top's come off the seat? Rot! (5)
20 Shakes, with ice (5)
22 Promise to take part in (6)
23 Had tried to, as a son should (6)
25 Tot playing in a pen, in the home (7)
27 Is ready for walkies when one entices into mischief (5,2)
30 Work out why the swimsuit looks so good on (6)
31 Means business (6)
32 Earn, when you restore the good name of (5)
35 Terribly old, nearly all get accommodation (5)
36 Got up to "Are very big inside" (5)
37 Definitely the result of an imprecise bisection (7)
39 Changed to "Patched up at one point" (7)
41 At a loose end's going to the mountains (5)
42 Our being in the hot sun for ages (5)
43 Not making such good time on the climb? (7,2)
44 Say how marvellous you are and stuff! (7)

DOWN
1 Get loaded and make accusations (6)
2 A fellow liking to flout authority would be perfect (8)
3 The get-up-and-go a sunny day gives you? (5,6)
4 Feel it will be approved of (2,7)
5 Mind! They're made of glass! (7)
6 Speak your mind? (5,5)
7 A sign of love, to males (4)
10 Am soft on the female carrying the basket (6)
11 Wander onto the street, which is unusual (7)
12 Say it's a cinch, in your hearing (6)
19 The blinking animal has disappeared (7)
21 Stopped to get the figure entered in the record (7)
24 Live frugally? Say personally that's untrue (4,7)
26 Didn't accept it should be muted (6,4)
28 Amusing or otherwise, he's a dunce (9)
29 Means to get close: isn't worried about (7)
30 Hesitate to change key, at first (6)
32 Getting the bug and becoming good at fishing (8)
33 Say they won't reintegrate (6)
34 In pain, did stagger when walking (7)
38 Made to dissolve, ourselves, into fits of laughter? (6)
40 Tell, on getting the tip-off, a girl (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12328

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Apish 6, Tight 9, Turners 10, Great 11, A-l-one 12, Bogie 13, Discern 15, Lea 17, Each 18, Mode-RN 19, St.-e'er 20, Off-ice 22, Hug-O 24, El-f 25, Pa-no-ply 26, Canal 27, T-roop 28, Dia-na (rev) 29, Megaton 30, Knees 31, Egg-Ed
DOWN: 2, Portia 3, Star-Ch. 4, Hut 5, Onion 6, Traitor 7, Isle 8, Hunter 12, Br-U-te 13, Def-oe 14, Scuff 15, Leg up 16, An-no-y 18, Me-t-al 19, Scra-p-es 21, Flor-in 22, Ho-pin-g 23, Glance 25, Par-AS 26, CO-me 28, Doe

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Cheat 6, Nerve 9, Galahad 10, Snort 11, Teach 12, Bosun 13, Javelin 15, Ant 17, Arid 18, Salute 19, Ariel 20, Edicts 22, Star 24, Dot 25, Desists 26, Clear 27, Stare 28, Asset 29, Atheist 30, Crime 31, Haste
DOWN: 2, Hangar 3, Agreed 4, Tat 5, Rayon 6, Natural 7, Eden 8, Vacant 12, Biers 13, Jaded 14, Visit 15, Aunts 16, Tears 18, Sever 19, Athlete 21, Doctor 22, Siesta 23, Attest 25, Dated 26, Cram 28, Ash

SU-DO-KU-6800

	7	2	9		3			5
				2	5		3	
			6					
9		8				1		
7				3				4
		4				2		8
					6			
	5		1	8				
4			2		9	3	1	

hard

SOLUTION TO 6799

8	6	5	2	3	9	7	4	1
2	7	1	4	8	6	5	9	3
4	3	9	7	1	5	8	6	2
7	4	8	6	5	2	3	1	9
9	1	3	8	7	4	6	2	5
5	2	6	3	9	1	4	7	8
3	9	7	1	4	8	2	5	6
1	8	2	5	6	7	9	3	4
6	5	4	9	2	3	1	8	7

To solve the puzzle:
To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

HITORI-3254

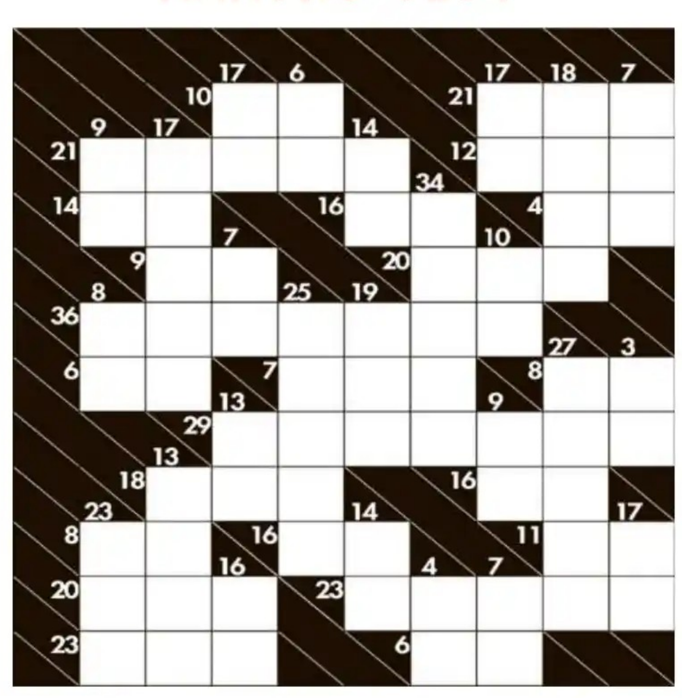
5	7	2	3	8	4	1	7
1	1	7	4	3	5	6	4
3	2	4	5	5	8	7	7
5	6	5	7	1	5	3	8
5	5	8	5	4	7	5	2
6	5	1	4	2	3	5	5
4	1	3	5	6	5	2	5
3	4	5	2	7	5	3	1

SOLUTION TO 3253

	7	1	2		4	5	8
7	2		8	6	5		1
8	3	5		2	6	1	
	5		1		3	4	6
1	4	8	3	5		2	7
	8	3		4	1		5
4	6		5	1	8	3	
	1	7		3		8	4

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3254



SOLUTION TO 3253

To solve the puzzle:
Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SCRABBLE

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O_1 R_1 M_3 T_1 G_2 M_3 E_1 — 4th Letter Triple — RACK 1

E_1 U_1 L_1 D_2 R_1 H_4 R_1 — RACK 2

L_1 S_1 A_1 O_1 T_1 N_1 D_2 — Double Word Score — RACK 3

E_1 H_4 U_1 C_3 T_1 R_1 O_1 — Triple Word Score — RACK 4

PAR SCORE 185-195
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

C_3 O_1 N_1 T_1 O_1 R_1 T_1 — RACK 1 = 77
A_1 C_3 Q_{10} U_1 I_1 T_1 S_1 — RACK 2 = 104
J_8 O_1 Y_4 R_1 I_1 D_2 E_1 — RACK 3 = 104
I_1 M_3 P_3 R_1 I_1 N_1 T_1 — RACK 4 = 83
W_4 E_1 I_1 G_2 H_4 T_1 Y_4 — RACK 5 = 101

PAR SCORE 310-320 — JUDD'S TOTAL 469

SU DO KU X - 3792

				7	3	9		
9				1				2
			6	2		3		
		9						
		1		5				
	7			3	6			
	3				5		2	6
		8						
7								

SOLUTION TO 3791

5	4	9	6	1	8	3	7	2
8	7	6	3	9	2	5	4	1
2	3	1	4	5	7	6	8	9
1	9	3	8	6	5	4	2	7
4	8	2	7	3	1	9	6	5
6	5	7	9	2	4	8	1	3
9	6	8	1	7	3	2	5	4
3	1	5	2	4	6	7	9	8
7	2	4	5	8	9	1	3	6

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

ED raids: TMC MPs detained for protest outside Shah's office

Police action arrogance in uniform, says Mamata Banerjee

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

TMC MP Mahua Moitra being detained in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

Eight Trinamool Congress MPs on Friday morning staged a protest outside the office of the Ministry of Home Affairs in Kartavya Bhavan here, claiming the misuse of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) following its raids on political consultancy I-PAC and the residence of its chief. They were detained by the police.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee described the police action as "shameful and unacceptable", saying dragging lawmakers on the streets for exercising their democratic right to protest was "not law enforcement" but "arrogance in uniform".

The MPs tried to enter the building at around 8.40 am, but were pushed out by security personnel. They then staged the protest outside. However, the police forcibly removed them from the spot around 10 am as they resisted detention.

The lawmakers—the TMC's Rajya Sabha floor leader Derek O'Brien, Lok Sabha Deputy Leader Satabdi Roy, Mahua Moitra, Bapi Haldar, Saket Gokhale, Pratima Mondal, Kirti Azad, and Sharmila Sarkar—were taken to the Parliament Street Police Station. They were released around 3.45 pm.

"Democracy does not function on the convenience or comfort of those in power. When BJP leaders protest, they expect red carpets and special privileges. When Opposition MPs raise their voices, they are dragged, detained, and humiliated," said Banerjee.

"Let it be clear: You respect us, we respect you. You drag us on the road, and we will drag you back to the constitutional idea of tolerance, dissent, and democratic morality... No government, no party, and no home minister gets to decide who deserves dignity in a democracy," she added.

Gokhale claimed Shah sent the "Extortion Directorate (ED) to steal our party documents, potential candidate list, and strategy documents" in Kolkata; Mamata Banerjee gave it a "befitting reply" on the spot. "We dare Shah to use whatever dirty tactic he wants against us. If Shah has agencies, we have the people of Bengal backing us," he said.

The protest came hours before West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was to hold a protest in Kolkata against the ED action. She had accused the ED of attempting to seize the TMC's internal data and election strategy during searches at the residence of I-PAC chief Pratik Jain and the organisation's Kolkata office.

HC adjourns plea after chaos in court

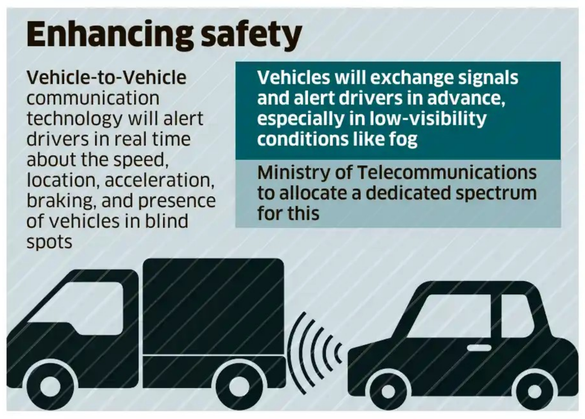
KOLKATA, PTI: The Calcutta High Court on Friday adjourned the scheduled hearing of cases related to the Enforcement Directorate's search and seizure operations at political consultancy firm I-PAC's office on account of unmanageable chaos inside the courtroom.

Justice Suvra Ghosh, in whose court the matter was scheduled to be heard, adjourned the hearing till January 14, and left her chair after repeated requests to those not connected with the pleas to leave the room fell on deaf ears.

While the TMC in its writ petition sought judicial intervention to restrain the ED from "prejudice, misuse and dissemination" of seized data during the search operations, the agency moved the bench alleging interference in its investigation, and prayed for transferring the probe into Thursday's developments to the CBI.

Govt to mandate V2V communication devices in vehicles by 2026-end

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS


Enhancing safety
Vehicle-to-Vehicle communication technology will alert drivers in real time about the speed, location, acceleration, braking, and presence of vehicles in blind spots
Vehicles will exchange signals and alert drivers in advance, especially in low-visibility conditions like fog
Ministry of Telecommunications to allocate a dedicated spectrum for this

Aimed at reducing road accidents and improving safety, the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is working to introduce Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) communication technology nationwide by the end of 2026.

The new system will alert drivers in real time about the speed, location, acceleration, braking, and presence of vehicles in the blind spots of nearby vehicles. This will enable drivers to take preventive action, said Union Road Transport Secretary V Umashankar.

The system will enable vehicles to communicate directly with each other, eliminating the need for mobile networks, and send real-time alerts when another vehicle approaches from any direction in a potentially hazardous manner.

V2V technology is currently in use in only a few countries. While consumers will have to bear the cost of the system, the exact pricing has not yet been disclosed.

The Ministry of Telecommunications has agreed to allocate a dedicated spectrum for this purpose.

Under this initiative, onboard units (OBUs) will be installed in vehicles to enable wireless data exchange. "Vehicles will exchange signals and alert drivers in advance, especially in low-visibility conditions like fog," he added.

The technology is expected to be particularly effective in preventing collisions involving parked or stationary vehicles and fast-moving traffic from behind, as well as large-scale pile-ups during dense fog—a recurring winter hazard in many parts of India.

The system will operate through a device similar to a SIM card, installed in vehicles, enabling 360-degree communication that covers all sides.

The V2V system will also work in coordination with Advanced Driver Assistance Systems. While some premium vehicles already feature similar capabilities using sensors, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said.

DRDO tests scramjet engine for hypersonic missiles

HYDERABAD, DHNS: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Friday successfully conducted the ground test of a full-scale actively-cooled long-duration scramjet engine for its hypersonic missile programme.

The test was carried out by the Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), the Hyderabad-based laboratory of the DRDO, at its state-of-the-art Scramjet Connect Pipe Test (SCPT) facility, achieving a runtime of over 12 minutes. This builds on an earlier subscale test conducted in April 2025 and marks a crucial step forward in hypersonic missile development.

The combustor and test facility were designed by DRDL and realised by industry partners, positioning India at the forefront of advanced aerospace capabilities.

"The DRDL, the Hyderabad-based laboratory of DRDO, has achieved a path-breaking milestone in the development of hypersonic missiles. The DRDL successfully conducted an extensive long-duration ground test of its Actively Cooled Scramjet Full Scale Combustor at its state-of-the-art Scramjet Connect Pipe Test Facility on January 9," the Ministry of Defence said.

'Bhrasht Janata Party': Rahul slams BJP govts

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Dubbing the BJP as "Bhrasht (Corrupt) Janata Party", Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday alleged that its "double-engine" governments in various states have "destroyed" the lives of the people through "corruption, abuse of power, and the poison of arrogance".

Rahul Gandhi

Citing the murder of Ankita Bhandari in Uttarakhand, the Unnao rape case in UP, and deaths from drinking contaminated water in Indore, among other incidents, he claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "double engine is running but only for billionaires" and for the common Indian, this double-engine government of corruption is "not development, but the speed of devastation—crushing someone's life every day".

"Across the country, the 'Bhrasht' Janata Party's double-engine governments have ruined people's lives. Corruption, abuse of power, and the poison of arrogance have spread from top to bottom in BJP's politics," he posted on 'X'.

Land-for-job scam: Charges framed against Lalu, others

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

The Rouse Avenue court in Delhi on Friday ordered framing of charges against 41 persons, including RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, his family members and others in the alleged land-for-job scam.

Lalu Prasad

Special Judge Vishal Gogne said Yadav used the Railway Ministry as his personal fiefdom to carry out a criminal enterprise, where public employment was used as a bargaining chip to acquire land parcels by the Yadav family in connivance with railway officials and his close aides.

While former railway minister Lalu Prasad, Rabri Devi, and their daughter Misa Bharti (Lok Sabha member), besides sons and ex-ministers Tej Pratap and Tejashwi Yadav, are political figures involved in the alleged scam, the order has also brought into focus Hema Yadav.

Hema is the fifth daughter (among seven sisters and two brothers) of former chief ministers Lalu and Rabri. She was named Hema as Lalu has been a big fan of actress Hema Malini.

An engineering graduate who completed her B-Tech from Ranchi-based Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Hema was married into a business-cum-political family in 2012. Hema and her husband, Vinit Yadav, have stayed away from the limelight of Bihar and its politics.

However, her name cropped up during the CBI investigation into the alleged scam.

During its raid at Hridyanand Yadav in Bihar's Gopalganj district, it found that in lieu of a railway job given to Hridyanand's kin, a premier piece of land was "gifted" to Hema Yadav as well.

The accused have denied the charges, claiming the case is politically motivated.

Meanwhile, JD(U) sought the resignations of the family members after the order.

(*With PTI inputs*)

Assam Oppn files FIR against BJP alleging vote theft in SIR

GUWAHATI, DHNS: Stepping up the pressure on the BJP over alleged 'vote chori', the Congress-led Opposition parties in Assam on Friday lodged an FIR against Dilip Saikia, president of the BJP state unit, for 'instructing the MLAs to ensure removal of voters or supporters of the Opposition' during the special revision of electoral rolls.

A team of Opposition parties lodged an FIR at Dispur police station in Guwahati, alleging that Saikia, during a video conference on January 4, asked the MLAs to delete the names of 5,000 to 10,000 voters in at least 60 Assembly constituencies.

"In the FIR, we demanded that the police collect video footage of the conference. The delegation also urged the police to ensure that no one involved in the alleged conspiracy escapes accountability," Congress leader Ripun Bora said.

BJP spokesperson Jayanta Kumar Goswami said it was a smear campaign against Saikia by Congress.

HC stays order to grant censor certificate to 'Jana Nayagan'

Movie producers likely to move SC for relief

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Trouble mounted for actor Vijay's *Jana Nayagan* on Friday with a division bench of the Madras High Court imposing a stay on the order by a single judge directing the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to grant a U/A certificate.

The court will now hear the matter next on January 21, but the movie producers are likely to approach the Supreme Court for relief.

The day saw dramatic developments with Justice P T Asha allowing the release of the movie. However, within minutes of the order, Additional Solicitor General ARL Sundaresan moved the first bench of Chief Justice M M Shrivastava and Justice G Arul Murugan, challenging the earlier order and sought an urgent hearing.

While Solicitor General Tushar Mehta appeared on behalf of the CBFC, the production house air-dashed former Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi to argue in its favour. The division bench felt that the single judge did not give sufficient time for the CBFC to put forth its point of view.

"You cannot create a false state of emergency and put pressure on the court to pass orders. How can you go ahead with the screening of the movie without any certificate in hand?" the bench asked the producers before staying the single judge order that directed the CBFC to issue a U/A 16+ certificate to the movie.

The judges also said the producers did not challenge the January 5 order of the CBFC that referred the movie to a revising committee after agreeing to give UA 16+ certificate. "All said and done, there was no certificate granted to respondents," the bench added.

'Parasakthi' gets U/A certificate

'Parasakthi', a movie that chronicles the 1965 anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu and is backed by the ruling DMK, will hit theatres on Saturday as planned. However, the film has undergone 25 modifications, including the deletion of 'Thee Paravattum' (Let the fire spread), a phrase popularised by Dravidian legend C N Annadurai.

The movie is intended to educate the current generation about the language struggle that Tamils undertook in the 1960s against the imposition of Hindi, timed well before the Assembly elections.

'Parasakthi' was stuck with the Censor Board. Sources said the CBFC demanded 25 modifications, including cuts, and muting of phrases, for obtaining the certificate.

Budget Session to begin on January 28

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Budget Session of Parliament will begin on January 28 and end on April 2.

As per practice, the session will start with President Droupadi Murmu's address to the joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs on January 28.

"On the recommendation of the Government of India, President of India Droupadi Murmu-ji has approved the summoning of both the Houses of Parliament for the Budget Session 2026. The Session will commence on January 28 and continue till April 2," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said on 'X'.

The first phase of the session will be between January 28 and February 13, and the Parliament will reassemble on March 9 and run till April 2.

The minister's tweet did not provide dates for tabling the Economic Survey and the presentation of the Budget.

Usually, the Budget is presented on February 1, and this time, it falls on a Sunday.

Alliance with DMK rock-solid, says TN Congress

CHENNAI, DHNS: Reassuring the DMK amid a visible strain in ties between the two parties and putting an end to speculation, the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) on Friday asserted that the DMK-Congress was "rock-solid" and appealed to party functionaries and leaders to "refrain" from making statements regarding the alliance.

TNCC chief K Selvaperunthagai said any public discussion or speculation on alliance matters at this stage will only benefit the BJP and weaken the unity of the I.N.D.I.A bloc and emphasised that the Congress was in talks only with the DMK for the 2026 assembly polls. His statement comes close on the heels of Congress leaders seeking a share in power with the DMK if the alliance were to win the 2026 polls and publicly supporting actor Vijay on the issue of his movie Jana Nayagan being blocked by the Censor board.

"The Congress-DMK alliance remains rock-solid. AICC in-charge Girish Chodankar-led five member committee has already held the first round of talks with the DMK. Since the Tamil Nadu Congress has to consult with the High Command on such issues, Congress members are advised not to comment publicly on the issue of alliance," Selvaperunthagai said.

His statement also comes at a time when the DMK is visibly unhappy with the happenings in Congress, whose leaders have gone public with their demand for a share in power. Additionally, some leaders have been praising Vijay and openly batting for the Congress considering an alliance with Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK).

14 killed as bus falls into gorge in HP

NAHAN (HP), PTI: Fourteen people have died in the bus mishap in Himachal's Sirmaur after a bus fell into a 500-foot deep gorge, police said on Friday.

The accident occurred in the afternoon, when an overloaded private bus, surpassing its seating capacity of 39, veered off the road on its way to Kupvi from Shimla, and fell into the gorge.

It landed upside down near Haripurdhar village. Besides 14 casualties, which include eight females, about 52 people have sustained injuries as per the list released by the administration.

Expressing grief over the accident, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

"The loss of lives due to a bus mishap in Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, is extremely saddening. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. Praying for the speedy recovery of those injured," the prime minister said.

Rescue operations underway after a bus fell into a gorge in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmaur district on Friday. PTI

President Droupadi Murmu also mourned the deaths and said on X, "I express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families who have lost their loved ones in this accident. I pray for the swift recovery of the injured individuals."

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, expressed deepest condolences and directed the district authorities to provide all possible assistance to the next of kin of those killed in the accident and ensure the best medical care to the injured.

Union health Minister J P Nadda, Leader of the Opposition in Himachal Assembly Jai Ram Thakur and state BJP chief Rajiv Bindal, Shimla BJP MP Suresh Kashyap and Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri have also expressed grief on the tragedy.

T'gana: 24 repeat child abuse offenders arrested

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

In a coordinated special operation, the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) deployed 18 teams across Telangana to arrest 34 cyber offenders on Friday.

Among them were 24 individuals accused of repeated Child Sexual Exploitative and Abusive Material (CSEAM) offences, along with 10 mule account holders involved in multiple cyber frauds within and outside the state.

These 24 repeat offenders had uploaded, stored, and circulated sexually explicit content involving minors.

The suspects, aged 18 to 48 and mostly from working- and middle-class backgrounds, including one state government employee, possessed material primarily featuring foreign victims aged 4 to 14, with nearly 90% involving girl children.

The Child Protection Unit (CPU), established within TGCSB in collaboration with India Child Protection (ICP) in February 2025, proactively monitors, detects, and acts on CSEAM content circulating online.

TGCSB Director Shikha Goel said the CPU serves as the nodal agency for CSEAM complaint. The unit also patrols social media, the deep web, and the dark web.

Minor girl rescued

While analysing CSEAM tipline evidence, in one case, TGCSB's CPU identified content suspected to be locally produced.

Using clues like the victim's age, background, features, and language, officers conducted a thorough investigation. They arrested the accused and rescued the minor victim.

DISCOVERY

2 new frog species found in Arunachal Pradesh

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

After months of extensive field work, Indian scientists have found two new slender-armed frogs from their secretive habitats in Arunachal Pradesh and named one of them after a journalist.

Delhi University frog hunter S D Biju and his PhD student, Akalabya, spotted the new species north of the Brahmaputra River, following three years of expeditions to isolated mountain regions of Arunachal Pradesh.

Mechuka slender arm frog

One of them, Soman's slender arm frog (Leptobrachium somani), was discovered at Tiwari Gaon in the state and named after late E Somanath, a noted journalist from Kerala, in recognition of his dedicated reporting on environmental issues.

Leptobrachium somani is a small-sized frog, measuring approximately 55 mm in length, with a uniformly greyish-brown body marked by irregular light-grey patterns and distinctive silver-grey to light-blue eyes.

The second new species, Mechuka slender arm frog (Leptobrachium mechuka), is a small-sized frog measuring about 60 mm in length and found in evergreen forests.

Modi's foreign policy swings like a pendulum, says Kharge

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday claimed that the Union government's foreign policy "swings like a wild pendulum", as he questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "silence" over US President Donald Trump's repeated remarks on India's Russian oil exports and reports of New Delhi lifting a ban on Chinese companies.

Kharge said Modi often claims that he will not allow the country to bow down, but what is happening today is exactly the opposite.

Kharge was reacting to reports suggesting that India is proposing to lift five-year-old curbs on Chinese firms bidding for Indian government contracts, as well as Trump's repeated remarks on India's oil imports from Russia.

"The Modi government's foreign policy swings like a wild pendulum — now this way, now that way — and the people of India are bearing the cost of it," he said.

Meanwhile, Congress General Secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh demanded that Modi explain his government's "sudden U-turns" on China policy during the Budget Session.

Russia attacks Ukraine with new Oreshnik ballistic missile

KYIV, AP/PTI: Russia bombarded Ukraine with hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles in a large-scale overnight attack, officials said on Friday, killing at least four people. For only the second time, it used a new ballistic missile that it says flies at 10 times the speed of sound and is unstoppable by air defences.

The intense barrage and the launching of the nuclear-capable Oreshnik missile came days after Ukraine and its allies reported major progress toward agreeing on how to defend the country from further Moscow aggression if a peace deal is struck to end Russia's almost 4-year-old invasion.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he has made significant progress on the terms of a possible peace settlement in negotiations with Washington envoys. But Moscow has given no public signal it is willing to budge from its demands.

The attack also coincides with a new chill in relations between Moscow and Washington after Russia condemned the US seizure of an oil tanker in the North Atlantic.

Protests sweep Iran despite internet shutdown

Khamenei accuses protesters of acting at Trump's behest

DUBAI, REUTERS/AFP

Protesters burn vehicles amid evolving anti-government unrest in Tehran on Friday. REUTERS

AYATOLLAH KHAMENEI
Iran's Supreme Leader

"Last night in Tehran, a bunch of vandals came and destroyed a building that belongs to them to please the US president... Iran will not back down in the face of saboteurs.

Iran was largely cut off from the outside world on Friday after authorities imposed an internet blackout to curb growing unrest, as video footage showed buildings and vehicles ablaze during anti-government protests across several cities.

In a televised address, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei vowed not to back down, accusing demonstrators of acting on behalf of émigré opposition groups and the United States, as rights groups reported police firing on protesters in the country's south.

"Iran will not back down in the face of vandals," Khamenei said, accusing protesters of seeking to please US President Donald Trump. Judiciary head Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei warned that punishment for rioters would be "decisive, maximal, and without legal leniency".

Death toll

While the unrest has not mobilised as many sections of society as earlier waves of political or economic protests, dozens are reported dead. Over 50 protesters have been killed in nearly two weeks, a rights group said on Friday.

"At least 51 protesters, including nine children under the age of 18, have been killed and hundreds more injured in the first thirteen days of the new round of nationwide protests in Iran," said the Norway-based NGO Iran Human Rights, raising a previous toll of 45 issued the day earlier.

Initially focused on economic grievances — with the rial losing half its value against the dollar last year and inflation topping 40% in December — the protests have since expanded to include slogans directly targeting the leadership.

The internet shutdown sharply reduced information flows, with phone calls into Iran failing to connect. At least 17 flights between Dubai and Iran were cancelled on Friday.

Protests began late last month with shopkeepers and merchants demonstrating over inflation and the collapsing currency, before spreading to universities and provincial cities, where young men clashed with security forces.

State television broadcast images of what it said were burning buses, cars and motorbikes, along with fires at metro stations and banks. It blamed the violence on the People's Mujahedin Organisation, an opposition group based abroad. Verified videos from Tehran showed hundreds of protesters marching, with one recording capturing a woman shouting, "Death to Khamenei!" Rights group Hengaw said a protest after Friday prayers in Zahedan, a Baluch-majority city, was met with gunfire, wounding several people.

Trump repeats claim of ending India-Pakistan conflict

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, PTI: US President Donald Trump has once again claimed to end the war between India and Pakistan while reiterating that eight planes were shot down in the conflict last year.

Trump has so far repeated the claim nearly 70 times that he stopped the conflict in May between India and Pakistan. "I did put out eight wars, eight and a quarter, because, you know, Thailand and Cambodia started going at it again," Trump said in an interview with Fox News Thursday.

He said that "in theory", one should get a Nobel prize for stopping each war.

"Because some of these wars were going on for 30 years. India, Pakistan were ready to go at it big. And these are two nuclear countries. I got that one stopped. Eight planes were shot down. They were really at it, and I got it stopped. It was a big one," Trump said.

India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the April 22 Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

A Russian vessel arrives at the Simon's Town Naval base ahead of the BRICS Plus countries which include China, Russia and Iran for a joint naval exercises in Cape Town, South Africa, on Friday. REUTERS

2 Indians living illegally in US held for smuggling cocaine

▸ Two Indians, living illegally in the US, have been arrested by federal authorities for smuggling more than 300 pounds of cocaine inside a semi-truck, PTI reports from New York.

Gurpreet Singh, 25, and Jasveer Singh, 30, were arrested by local authorities in Putnam County, Indiana, on January 4 for narcotics trafficking. The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said this week that US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has lodged arrest detainers for them. The agency noted that the two men, who entered the US illegally, were arrested for smuggling more than 300 pounds of cocaine inside a semi-truck in Putnam County, Indiana. Both individuals were given commercial drivers licenses issued by the state of California. "With a lethal dose of cocaine being as little as 1.2 grams, that is enough to kill more than 113,000 Americans," the DHS said in a statement. Gurpreet Singh had illegally entered the US on March 11, 2023 near Lukeville, Arizona and was released into the country under the Biden administration. He freely admitted to law enforcement that he was a citizen of India and illegally in the US, the DHS said.

Nasa cuts short space mission

▸ In a rare move, Nasa is cutting a mission aboard the International Space Station short after an astronaut had a medical issue, AP/PTI reports from New York .

The space agency said on Thursday the US-Japanese-Russian crew of four will return to Earth in the coming days, earlier than planned. Nasa cancelled its first spacewalk of the year because of the health issue. The space agency did not identify the astronaut or the medical issue, citing patient privacy. The crew member is now stable. Nasa officials said that it was not an onboard emergency, but are "erring on the side of caution for the crew member," said Dr James Polk, Nasa's chief health and medical officer. Polk said this was Nasa's first medical evacuation from the space station, although astronauts have been treated aboard for things like toothaches and ear pain.

Machado intends to give her Nobel Prize to Trump

It cannot be transferred, says Nobel Institute

WASHINGTON, AFP

US President Donald Trump said on Thursday that he will meet Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado in Washington next week, adding that she intends to give him her Nobel Peace Prize — an honour he has long sought.

The meeting will be the first between Trump and Machado, who emerged from hiding in Venezuela last year to travel to Oslo and accept the Nobel Peace Prize. It comes just over a week after US forces toppled her rival, Nicolas Maduro.

"I understand she's coming in next week sometime, and I look forward to saying hello to her," Trump told Fox News. Machado has said she wants to share — or effectively hand over — her Nobel Peace Prize to Trump, and the president indicated she may offer him the award during their meeting. "That would be a great honour," Trump said.

Trump has expressed frustration at not receiving the prize, despite his efforts in solving multiple conflicts. On Thursday, he said it was a "major embarrassment" for Norway. In Oslo, however, the Nobel Institute stressed that the prize cannot be transferred. "A Nobel Prize can neither be revoked nor transferred to others," Nobel Institute spokesman Erik Aasheim said. He added that while the prize itself cannot be reassigned, the laureate is free to use the prize money as they wish.

TANKER SEIZED

■ US seized another oil tanker – a fifth – in the Caribbean Sea on Friday, as the Trump administration continues to target sanctioned tankers travelling to and from Venezuela.

US top court delays ruling on Trump tariffs

WASHINGTON, REUTERS

The US Supreme Court will not issue a ruling on Friday in a major case testing the legality of President Donald Trump's sweeping global tariffs.

The court is expected to issue rulings on January 14. The justices delivered one decision on Friday in an unrelated criminal case. The challenge to Trump's tariffs represents a significant test of presidential powers and of the court's willingness to check the Republican president's far-reaching assertions of authority since he returned to office in January 2025. The outcome is also expected to have major implications for the global economy.

During arguments heard on November 5, both conservative and liberal justices appeared to question the legality of the tariffs, which Trump imposed by invoking a 1977 law designed for national emergencies.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Reliance Jio to divest 2.5% stake through IPO

The company is eyeing $4.5 billion from the issue

REUTERS

Reliance Jio Platforms is considering an IPO this year that would float 2.5% of the company, sources said, a move that could make it India's largest-ever issue worth over $4 billion.

The Mukesh Ambani-led company is the parent of India's largest telecom operator Reliance Jio, with more than 500 million users. Its debut is the country's most highly-anticipated IPO this year.

In November, investment bank Jefferies estimated that Reliance Jio's valuation stood at $180 billion. At that valuation, a 2.5% stake sale would raise $4.5 billion, dwarfing Hyundai Motor India's $3.3 billion IPO in 2024.

Over the past six years, Jio has diversified into AI and raised funds from well-known investors including KKR, General Atlantic, Silver Lake and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority.

MEGA MARKET ARRIVAL

- Reliance Jio's IPO is India's most-awaited in 2026
- Reliance waiting for regulation change as it is eager to list only 2.5%
- Jefferies has valued the business at $180 billion
- Ambani has said target for listing is first half of 2026

Reliance would like to list only 2.5% of Jio's shares given the large size of the company, the sources said, even though a proposal from India's market regulator to reduce the minimum size of share sales for large companies seeking IPOs to 2.5% from 5% is awaiting approval from the finance ministry.

"The preference is to list 2.5% at this point if the law gets changed as a smaller amount creates more pricing tension," one of the sources with direct knowledge said, adding that some bankers were pitching a valuation of $200 billion to $240 billion for the business, though Reliance has not decided on a firm number.

Reliance did not respond to Reuters requests for comment.

Typically around 75-80% of Jio Platforms annual revenues come from its telecoms business.

Red-hot Indian market

It has not been decided if the Jio IPO would be a so-called offer-for-sale, which allows existing shareholders to sell their shares to the public, or if it would also involve the issuance of new stock. Hyundai's India IPO, for example, was an offer-for-sale and did not raise new funds.

The Jio listing would add to strong momentum in India's IPO market over the last couple of years; it ranked as the world's No. 2 primary equity issuance market in 2025, raising $21.6 billion as of December 18, according to LSEG data.

Reliance also plans to list its retail unit, but that is unlikely before 2027 or 2028, sources have previously told Reuters.

In 2019, Ambani first flagged plans to list Jio within five years. Last year, Reuters reported that he delayed the offering beyond 2025 as the company wanted a higher valuation by expanding into other niche digital businesses.

Reliance Jio is also set to lock horns with Elon Musk, who is expected to launch the Starlink internet service in India in the coming months. Jio has also partnered Nvidia to develop AI infrastructure.

In August, Ambani said Jio would list in the "first half of 2026". The listing timeline depends on market conditions, one of the sources said.

Although formal appointments have yet to be made, bankers from Morgan Stanley and Kotak are already working with Reliance on drafting the Jio IPO papers, which can be a drawn-out process, a fifth source with direct knowledge of the situation said.

India's forex reserves drop to $686.80 bn

MUMBAI, PTI: India's forex reserves dropped by $9.809 billion to $686.801 billion in the week to January 2, the RBI said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the forex reserves had jumped by $3.293 billion to $696.61 billion.

For the week ended January 2, foreign currency assets, a major component of reserves, decreased by $7.622 billion to $551.99 billion, the central bank's data showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effects of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units, such as the euro, pound, and yen, held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Value of the gold reserves dropped by $2.058 billion to $111.262 billion during the week, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by $25 million to $18.778 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF dropped by $105 million to $4.771 billion in the reporting week, according to the apex bank's data.

Bourses take downtrend for 5th day amid tariff blues

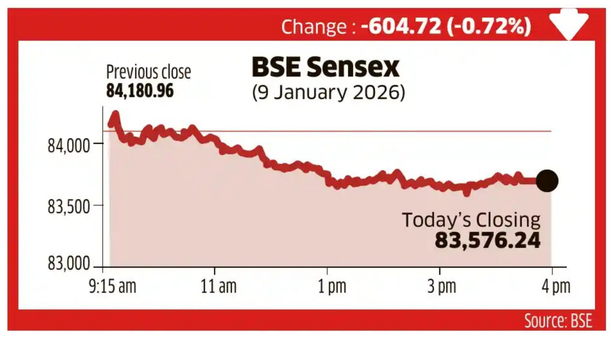
MUMBAI, PTI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty buckled under selling pressure for the fifth straight session on Friday, falling nearly 1%, as investors turned cautious due to concerns over potential US tariff hikes amid lingering geopolitical worries.

The relentless foreign capital flight from Indian markets also affected the market sentiment, traders said.

After a brief rebound in early trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex failed to carry forward the momentum and tumbled 604.72 points, or 0.72%, to sink below the 84,000-level and settle at 83,576.24. During the day, it dropped 778.68 points, or 0.92%, to 83,402.28. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 193.55 points or 0.75% to 25,683.30.

From the 30-Sensex firms, NTPC, ICICI Bank, Adani Ports, Bharti Airtel, Sun Pharma and Bajaj Finance were among the biggest laggards. However, Asian Paints, HCL Tech, Bharat Electronics and Reliance Industries were among the gainers.



Rupee falls 28 paise to 90.18/$

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee declined 28 paise to settle at 90.18 against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by elevated global crude oil prices and persistent foreign fund outflows amid rising geopolitical tensions.

A stronger greenback and weak sentiment in equity markets are putting pressure on the local unit, according to traders. At the interbank forex, the rupee opened higher at 89.88, but lost ground through the day to settle at 90.18 against the dollar, down 28 paise from its previous close. During the day, it traded between 89.88 and 90.25.

Silver futures rebound over 2%

NEW DELHI, PTI: Silver futures rebounded by Rs 5,898 to Rs 2,49,222 per kg due to value buying on Friday after two straight sessions of sharp profit booking, while gold advanced to Rs 1,38,525 per 10 grams amid firm global trends.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), silver futures for March delivery surged by Rs 5,898, or 2.42%, to Rs 2,49,222 per kg in 12,424 lots.

Meanwhile, gold futures for the February contract also increased by Rs 783, or 0.57%, to Rs 1,38,525 per 10 grams in a business turnover of 14,767 lots.

Tata Motors to roll out luxury Jaguar Land Rover cars from Tamil Nadu facility from February

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Within 16 months of laying the foundation stone, Tata Motors will roll out the first car from the luxury Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) portfolio from its greenfield manufacturing unit in Ranipet district, in the first half of February.

Highly-placed sources told *DH* that the Range Rover Evoque will be the first car to be produced from the facility, spread over 470 acres, which will manufacture cars from both Tata Motors and JLR portfolios. "We expect the first vehicle to be rolled out of the facility on February 9," the source added.

The Evoque is a compact SUV, priced from Rs 65 lakh (ex-showroom) in the Indian market.

"While the Evoque is the first model to be produced at the plant, the company will start manufacturing other models in due course. The company will start with CKD (Completely Knocked Down) assembly operations and will take seven years to be fully-operational," sources said.

The factory's inauguration is a significant development as it boosts 'Make in India For the World' programme and allows manufacturing of JLR vehicles from scratch. Such vehicles are currently being assembled at Tata Motors' facility in Pune.

The company is investing Rs 9,000 crore in the Panapakkam facility, which will have an annual production capacity of over 2.5 lakh vehicles over the next 5-7 years. The facility — Tata Motors' second factory in South India after Dharwad in Karnataka — will produce both conventional and electric vehicles catering to domestic and export markets.

Range Rover Evoque. BLOOMBERG

Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin are likely to present at the factory located inside an industrial estate owned by the State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu (SIPCOT) in Panapakkam of Ranipet district on February 9, when the first car is slated to be rolled out of the assembly line.

The factory getting operational in just 16 months of the foundation stone being laid on September 28, 2024, further cements Tamil Nadu's image as the "Detroit of India", with several global automotive majors like Hyundai, BMW, and Daimler, having made the state their home.

Vietnam's VinFast is rolling out electric cars from its greenfield unit in Thoothukudi and plans to expand the facility to manufacture electric buses and scooters, and Ford is reviving its defunct Maraimalainagar plant to produce new-generation powertrains.

Tata Motors' announcement about the Ranipet facility in March 2024 came three years after the company chose to buy Ford's Sanand plant over the Maraimalainagar plant near Chennai, following the US auto giant's decision to exit the Indian market in September 2021. The Tatas decided to buy the Sanand plant as only a wall separated the company's factory with the one that was owned by Ford.

A long journey with stamps

Meet Sushil Mehra, 73, who pursues his passion for stamps and postal covers even in the Internet era. He tells Shraddha A K how a whim sparked his hobby, and what separates a collector from a hoarder

The year was 1969. Sushil Mehra, then in Class 11, accompanied his father to the Gandhi Centenary Exhibition in Delhi, where his family lived. The show traced Mahatma Gandhi's life and legacy through photographs, documents, and memorabilia. Amid the displays was an unusually crowded counter. Curious, Mehra went to see what was happening. "Gandhi stamps," someone said. The Indian postal department was selling commemorative stamps issued specially for the centenary. On an impulse, Mehra joined the line. He bought four stamps (20 paise, 75 paise, Re 1, and Rs 5) along with commemorative coins of 20 paise, 50 paise, and Re 1.

Back home, Mehra peeled the stamp off the first day cover (FDC). Only later did someone explain to him that he had made a mistake. A first day cover is an envelope affixed with a newly issued postage stamp, cancelled on the day of its release, and is considered a collectible. The mistake embarrassed him, but it also sparked his curiosity about stamps. Why were people fascinated by tiny pieces of paper, printed in bulk, passed briefly from hand to hand, then torn off and discarded?

Today, Mehra will tell you that collecting stamps is not merely about accumulating paper. It is about curating history in miniature. Stamps record wars, freedom movements, and peace treaties. They celebrate cultural pride, sporting milestones, and scientific and infrastructural feats. They draw attention to causes such as wildlife conservation, child welfare, and gender equality.

Stamps, he adds, are among the most thought-out objects a nation issues and are rich in symbolism. The 1969 commemorative Gandhi stamps were released when a young, independent India was reaffirming the principles of non-violence and social justice. "Gandhi is a popular subject for stamp collectors around the world. Those 1969 stamps inspired many countries to issue their own stamps honouring Gandhi," recalls the 73-year-old philatelist. The stamps he picked up on a whim as a schoolboy are now part of his larger Gandhi collection, which won an award at the Australian Virtual Philatelic Exhibition last November.

Mehra now lives in Bengaluru. He was the immediate past president (2024-25) of the Karnataka Philatelic Society. He has over 10,000 stamps and 1,000 picture postcards in his collection. And they reflect the story of India across the second half of the 20th century till date. Notable among them are 1971 refugee relief stamps, all post-Independence Indian stamps, Tilak centenary stamps, picture postcards from the British India period, and meter frank covers dating back to the colonial era. A meter frank is a machine-printed imprint that shows postage has been paid; it is used as an alternative to traditional adhesive stamps. Some of his prized items have travelled to exhibitions in Thailand, Indonesia, and Germany.

Sushil Mehra has a collection of over 10,000 stamps and 1,000 picture postcards. (Left) A selection of special covers, including a 1984 cover reproducing a quote by English novelist George Orwell. (Below) A special cover with Mehra's photograph beside the stamp, created through India Post's My Stamp service, and a postmark featuring the 'Monkey Top', an architectural motif seen in Bengaluru Cantonment. DH PHOTOS/PUSHKAR V

Postman mentor

Mehra grew up in an era when information travelled by post. His home in Delhi was near a post office, and he would often watch letters arrive. A postman, noticing Mehra's curiosity, became his mentor. He told Mehra about philatelic bureaus — postal counters that sell commemorative stamps and covers. "Give me the money. I will get the stamps for you," he would say, and then cycle to the bureau and return with stamps. But his pocket money was too meagre to keep up with his growing interest. Most stamps cost 25 paise to Re 1. Having a Rs 5 stamp was a luxury. To buy stamps, Mehra began saving small amounts he received from elders during festivals. He wasn't looking for rare or thematic pieces, and collected everything, from Indian to foreign stamps. "I did not know what was valuable. I just wanted stamps," he recalls. That began to change in the late 1970s, when he moved to Bengaluru.

Karnataka scene

Philately has been active in Karnataka since the 1960s, with associations in Davanagere, Mysuru, Hassan, Shivamogga, Belagavi, Hubballi, and Mangaluru. Today, only a few of these societies are running. The Karnataka Philatelic Society was established in March 1975, soon after KARNAPEX 75, the state's first philatelic exhibition, was held. The then-post master general of the Karnataka Circle had urged philatelists to form an apex body for the state. But only a handful of societies chose to affiliate with KPS. Today, it has 850 members within the state, along with some from outside.

The city had a strong culture of philatelic associations, stamp exhibitions, and study circles where collectors with niche interests met. Dr Sita Bhateja, Chaitanya Dev, Ramu Srinivasa, and Col L G Shenoi were among the prominent hobbyists of the time. From them, Mehra learned that a philatelist was not one who owned many stamps, but one who could explain why a stamp was issued and what it reflected. Collecting without studying was merely hoarding. Sophia Tenbrook was another influential figure. She taught Mehra restraint — what to buy, what to ignore, and how to build niche themes.

By then, Mehra had begun earning through his family business of manufacturing hardware and paint brushes. Financial independence allowed him to buy reference books. He picked up 'Paper Jewels: Postcards from the Raj', and stamp catalogues by Stanley Gibbons, and travelled to exhibitions in Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata. By the 1980s and '90s, he had discovered stamp dealers who met at post offices, or ran tiny curio shops. He also began mailing money orders to collectors, specifying the stamps he wanted, and waited weeks for them to arrive.

Refugee relief tax

Today, his philately albums aren't just inventories. They tell stories.

His 'Meter Franks of India' collection, spanning 5,000 covers from both the pre- and post-Independence eras, took over three decades to assemble. And some treasures he expected to be nearly impossible to find came to him easily. He was keen on a picture postcard depicting a woman operator resting her hand on a bioscope (portable, hand-cranked projector) while a man looks through it. He found it on eBay, an online marketplace. It's his proudest find in his extensive collection on occupations in British India. The archive also features a shoelace hawker, a night watchman, and agricultural labourers.

He also has a collection of stamps and covers documenting India's space odyssey, from the launch of its first satellite, Aryabhatta, in 1975, to the Mars mission Mangalyaan and the ongoing Chandrayaan lunar explorations of the 21st century.

Indian stamps have not only celebrated the nation's achievements, but also served humanitarian causes. During the India-Pakistan war in 1971, millions fled from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). To support relief efforts, the Indian government issued a stamp depicting refugees on foot carrying their belongings and children. It also allowed post offices to collect a temporary 5 paisa surcharge on most mail from November 1971 to March 1973 as a refugee tax. "Each post office could put its overprint on the stamp and collect a surcharge above the stamp's face value. These stamps, cancellations and other postal stationery are now rare, and highly sought after by collectors. They are a major area of study in philately," says Mehra, who has 1,500 such covers. He has also recorded details like their watermark, edge perforations, and the press where they were printed. For Mehra, collecting is inseparable from research. "I like what they can tell me," he says.

Visual history

Mehra approaches picture postcards with the same rigour he accords stamps, recording every detail, from the publisher and date of posting to the postal route it took and the message it carried. This fascination began in his early years in Bengaluru, when he lived near City Market. While wandering on streets like B V K Iyengar Road, his eyes fell on picture postcards that vendors were selling. Unlike stamps, which are largely symbolic, picture postcards are literal, he realised. They show cityscapes, bazaars, and everyday life. He began collecting more and more picture postcards depicting the city. That would become his first major thematic collection, featuring vintage photos of the markets and streets of Bangalore Cantonment.

Over time, this collection grew into a visual history of Bengaluru and its transformation, culminating into his first book, 'Vintage Picture Postcards of Bangalore', in 2021. The publication marked a turning point. It turned his hobby from a private pursuit into public documentation. Since then, Mehra has authored about 25 books on philately, covering Indian postal history, thematic collections, special covers, and exhibitions. A collection of over 5,000 picture postcards from the British era, including rare pieces from European publishers, has even won him awards.

Bargains and losses

Collectors seek out stamps for many reasons — from how rare they are to how well they are preserved. Sometimes, they seek a single piece that might complete a thematic collection. Naturally, this leads to competition at auctions and exhibitions, and sometimes desperation.

Mehra recalls one collector of Air India memorabilia who negotiated hard for multiple Air India first flight covers from his collection. A first flight cover is a special envelope that is carried on the inaugural flight of a new air route. Mehra parted with them eventually, but still has some of these prized finds, including a first flight cover from Air India's Sharjah-Mumbai service, dated March 10, 1981. That encounter struck a chord because even Mehra has regretted missing rare pieces he could not afford when they appeared on the market. "You think of the pieces you missed just as much as the ones you proudly own," he says. There is also the disappointment of losing painstakingly acquired artefacts, sometimes to humidity, sometimes because you misplaced them.

Today, online platforms have transformed the philately world. Stamps worth Rs 25 lakh are traded and auctioned on sites such as eBay and Delcampe. Mehra also keeps a close eye on what is circulating in exhibitions online. While these developments have widened access, they have also fuelled speculation. Mehra worries that when collecting becomes investment-driven, it can hollow out scholarship. "A stamp without context is just paper," he insists. He says he has never collected as an investor, even though some of the 750 Gandhi covers in his possession, bought for Rs 5,000 each, are now worth over a lakh apiece.

Mailed by ship

The younger generation has grown up with email and social media as its primary modes of communication, largely disengaged from physical mail. Mehra does not deny the decline of philately, but believes the hobby will endure. Collectors have always been few in number. His real concern is preservation. What happens to collections built over a lifetime? Will institutions care? Will families understand their value? Mehra is fortunate. His son, Gauresh, 42, helps design his exhibitions and assists with philatelic research, while his 10-year-old granddaughter, Rhunika, helps sort his collections.

And despite advances in communication technology, postal stamps continue to be issued actively — definitive stamps for everyday mail, service stamps for government use, and commemorative stamps to mark special occasions. "Business owners, the elderly, greeting card lovers, and philatelists still send letters. My friends send me decorative postmarks from different places. I have collected 428 such from across India, including 107 from Karnataka," he says. A postmark is the regular stamp placed on mail to show the date and place of posting. A decorative one, called Permanent Pictorial Cancellation, carries an image, often of a local landmark, and is prized by collectors as a souvenir.

After over five decades, does Mehra ever feel he is done with the hobby? "No," he says matter-of-factly, because "there is always a new theme one can explore". He began with stamps, then moved on to picture postcards. He also transitioned from Gandhi to Bal Gangadhar Tilak in his postage memorabilia collection journey. "India celebrated Tilak centenary in 1953 and issued commemorative stamps. But unlike in the case of Gandhi, no other country issued stamps for Tilak, which makes them rare," he explains.

Among his most treasured pieces is a 2-anna Tilak stamp on a cover posted aboard the merchant ship M/V Hoegh Trader. It was sent from Djibouti (then a French territory in the Middle East) to Chicago in 1957. Mehra's research shows it is the only known Tilak stamp to have travelled on a foreign ship!

(With inputs from Reya Mehrotra)

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MUSICANA

Futuristic electronic hip-hop with a vintage mood

Artiste Joel Sakkari's new album captures the sights and sounds of Bengaluru, writes Rashmi Rajagopal

Bengaluru-based Joel Sakkari has been making music for the past 15 years. But it was only two years ago that he struck out on his own. "It dawned on me that my sound had evolved to a stage where it warranted an identity of its own," Sakkari says. Thus, Sakre was born. The lo-fi electronic hip-hop act is essentially experimental yet boasts a vintage soundscape.

At a time when electronic music is primarily composed on a computer, Sakre relies on old-school samplers and other instruments to produce sounds that have a nostalgic edge.

"The SP-404 is one such sampler device from the '90s and it was used widely in hip-hop music that emerged from America's east coast," he shares. A guitarist, he often incorporates live guitar into his sets.

This month, Sakkari will debut his latest album 'Bangalore Sonic Archives' at BLR Hubba. It is a representation of the sounds and places of Bengaluru that one often overlooks, he explains. "For instance, I live in J P Nagar and I often hear nadaswaram players. So one day I followed the sound, found the player and asked him to play something for me while I recorded it. I then chopped the recording and have used it in one of the tracks in the album," he shares. The album features both audio and visuals. In another track, the bare old-school interiors of India Coffee House serve as the backdrop for his music, which falls under the category of 'retro futurism'. The ficus trees of Bengaluru, some over 200 years old, are the subjects of another of his tracks from the album.

The album was born out of a social media art project. "A Dubai-based art organisation, called Alserkal Avenue, chose me to take over their social media page for a week and I was expected to populate it with music that represented my home," he says. When the response he received was better than he expected, he decided to turn it into an album. A few more tracks were added and a seven-track album was created. The album also has samples of Upendra dialogues, an actor Sakkari admires. "In his films, he often promoted concepts that were way ahead of their time such as deep philosophy, secular values and scientific temperament," he states.

Sakkari, originally from Dharwad, grew up listening to south Indian film music. Later in life, he discovered that jazz music truly resonated with his sensibilities. "So my musical sensibilities are a mix of the cinematic heritage of south India and jazz music from different parts of the world," he says.

Joel Sakkari has been performing as Sakre for the past two years.

A KITE called KETKI

Ashrafi Antia pens a heartwarming tale of a kite's flight, friendship and kindness

Ketan admired his work with pride. He'd just made himself the prettiest kite. It was a work of art that he'd put his heart and soul into. He named his kite Ketki and decided to fly her in the neighbourhood kite-flying competition on Makara Sankranti, which falls on January 14.

Ketki was made from bright, yellow tissue paper that made her light and easy to fly. She had a long, multi-coloured streamer-like tail. Ketan had even drawn a smiling face on her with big eyes and long lashes. Taking her out on a test flight, he marvelled at how she soared over houses and trees as he let out his line.

At dawn on the day of the competition, Ketan had butterflies in his stomach, although he was confident that his beloved Ketki would put on a good show. There were all types of kites vying for attention that morning. He looked at the striking red, black, blue and pink ones, which were diamond-shaped like Ketki, but they were readymade; not made with loving care like his Ketki. Many people came up to Ketan, complimenting him on his pretty handmade kite. He stared in awe at a beautiful blue butterfly-shaped kite and a pink one shaped like a jellyfish with its tails trailing behind it, that had come all the way from Japan.

Desai uncle, who was in charge, ordered all the contestants gathered in the neighbourhood park to get ready. When the next gust of wind blew, he struck a large gong that he had brought along. Ketan's younger sister, Rina, held Ketki carefully in front of her with outstretched arms, holding onto her with just her fingertips, as he had taught her during practise sessions and let her go when the gong struck, while Ketan reeled out the string on his firki. Ketki took to the air, catching the gust of wind and riding high into the sky on it. She soared over the trees ahead of the rest of the kites as she was as light as air. Rina clapped her hands in delight and began to sing a song from the movie 'Mary Poppins':

"Let's go fly a kite,
Up to the highest height,
And send it soaring...
Up through the atmosphere,
Up where the air is clear
Oh, let's go fly a kite."

Suddenly, an aggressive red kite with a triangular black tail started chasing Ketki. It belonged to Jatin, the school bully. Ketan spied the malice in his eyes as he made a beeline for Ketki's string and cut it with his glass-edged manja. Doing a victory dance, Jatin yelled, "kai-po-che" ('I have cut your kite' in Gujarati), as Ketki sailed away into the heavens, far beyond reach.

Ketki suddenly realised she was free. There was no string tugging at her and guiding her through the sky. How tiny Ketan seemed from where she was. He looked ready to burst into tears, shading his eyes from the sun and squinting to catch a glimpse of her. Soon, he was out of sight as she was carried away by the gusty winds into the clouds above.

Suddenly, Ketki spied a bird. The winged one approached and asked, "What kind of strange creature are you?"

"I'm a kite," said Ketki.

"Oh, no! I'm a kite, and you certainly don't look like me," declared the bird, unconvinced by Ketki's answer. Ketki had heard Ketan's dadi explaining to him that it takes all kinds to make the world, which she repeated authoritatively to the bird. "I'm made of paper, don't have wings, but can still fly."

"Oh, I see! My feathers and wings help me fly. I guess we are both different kinds of kites then. Let's be friends. I'm Kiki," said the bird, introducing herself. Ketki was delighted to make a friend. As they flew along, Kiki regaled Ketki with her travel adventures.

Suddenly, the wind stopped blowing, and Ketki began to lose height. Soon, she was in free fall, spiralling downwards towards the trees, their outstretched branches waiting to catch her. With a whoosh, Ketki crashed into the trees. Her dangling string and long tail got entangled in the branches, and a big gash appeared on her body as the pokey branches ripped through the delicate tissue paper. Kiki, the Kite, swooped down, alighting on a branch beside her.

"I'm trapped," cried Ketki in dismay. Kiki tried to untangle Ketki, who began to cry, "Now I can't fly. How will I find my way home to Ketan?" Kind-hearted Kiki, who had managed to free Ketki from the grasp of the branches, said, "Don't cry. I'll take you." Using her beak, she gently picked Ketki up, followed her directions, and flew towards Ketan's home.

The two friends noticed Ketan sitting under a tree, his tear-stained face buried in his hands. Kiki perched on the tree. Bidding goodbye to her grateful friend, she dropped Ketki into Ketan's lap.

Ketan opened his eyes. Overcome with joy, he hugged Ketki to his chest. "I'm so glad you found your way home. I was praying you would. Don't worry, I'll mend you, and soon you'll fly again," he declared. As promised, Ketan patched her up with some tissue paper and rice starch and flew her in his garden a week later. Kiki spotted her and flew above her, happy to see her friend flying again.

Ketki waggled her tail, delighted to reunite with her comrade in flight.

3 DIY craft using pasta

...and some basic stationery

Flower bouquet

Materials needed
- White chart paper or thick drawing paper
- Uncooked farfalle (bow-tie pasta)
- Poster or food colours
- Paintbrush
- Glue
- Brown paper or a small piece of jute fabric
- Thread or twine
- Pencil

Method
- Paint the pasta in different colours like pink, yellow, orange or green. Let them dry completely.
- On the chart paper, draw a light outline of a bouquet shape.
- Start gluing the painted pasta on the top part of the drawing to make it look like flowers in full bloom.
- Stick a small piece of brown paper or jute at the bottom so that it looks like the bouquet's wrapping paper. Stick a bow made of thread or twine to finish the bouquet.
- This pasta bouquet can be framed or used as a greeting card.

Vibrant fish

Materials needed
- Chart paper or thick craft paper (green or any bright colour)
- Uncooked pasta in different shapes (spirals, shells, bow-ties, penne, elbow macaroni)
- Poster colours or acrylic paints
- Paintbrush
- Glue
- Scissors
- Black sketch pen
- Googly eye

Method
- Draw a fish shape on the chart paper (as seen in the image) and cut it out. You can ask an adult to help with this if needed.
- Paint the pasta pieces in different bright colours. Leave them aside to dry completely.
- Once dry, stick the pasta onto the fish. Use bow-tie pasta above the tail, penne and shell pasta for the fins, and macaroni for the scales on the body.
- Glue a googly eye near the head, or draw an eye using a black sketch pen on a small round piece of white paper and stick it.
- Add small details like a mouth or scales using the sketch pen. Let everything dry.
- Your pasta fish is ready to decorate your wall.

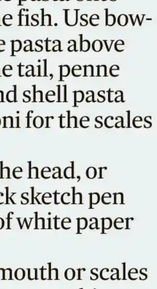
Pasta necklace

Materials needed
- Uncooked tube-shaped pasta (penne or rigatoni)
- Poster or food colours
- Paintbrush
- Wool or string
- Scissors
- Tape (optional)

Method
- Paint the pasta pieces in bright colours such as red, orange, green or yellow. Leave them aside to dry completely.
- Cut a piece of wool or string to the length you want for a necklace or bracelet.
- To make threading easier, wrap a small piece of tape around one end of the string to form a stiff tip.
- Carefully slide the string through the painted pasta, mixing colours to create fun patterns.
- Once you are happy with the design, tie the ends of the string together securely.
- Your pasta necklace is ready to wear or gift to a friend.

LET'S DEBATE!

Want to take part in the upcoming *Open Sesame* debate? Share your thoughts in a crisp 200-word essay on the topic 'Should candy be banned?' Mail your works to o*pensesame@deccanherald.co.in.* Entries close on January 22. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, school and city. And send us a recent photograph.



Word of the Week

ransack

(verb)
— to search a place thoroughly for something in a manner that causes damage or disorder.

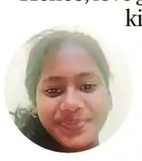
Usage
— The burglars ransacked Sneha's house, and left drawers and cupboards open.
— Officials ransacked the warehouse in a late-night raid.

A fresh page...

Open Sesame readers write verses about new beginnings

Begin anew

Begin the New Year with
No resolutions to make, no promises to keep
A fresh page with
Thoughts of the poor and hungry
The sad and lonely, the sick, and the old
Women and children.
On a fresh page, remember
That all progress in society
Takes place outside one's comfort zone.
Hence, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly.
On a fresh page, I say
'A very Happy New Year to one and all'



– ADELIA RAPHAELA, 12
Bengaluru, Karnataka

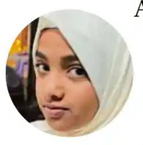
Gentle prayers

I crave to begin a fresh page,
As I enter into my new age,
By offering prayers to the Almighty,
Seeking peace and prosperity.
May God grant me health,
As health is wealth,
May He help me build character,
As a foundation for my future.
I pray to Him with reverence,
To provide me with good qualities,
Such as humility and kindness,
And to help people in distress.

– KASHVI KARTHIK, 8
Bengaluru, Karnataka

Pages of wonder

Every time I write,
A fresh page opens with delight,
Making it a hobby
In my new lobby.
With freshness and delight,
Grabbing my pen, I start to write,
With words full of wonder,
And not in a slumber.
My new, fresh page
shines with light
In the starlit night.



– LAAIBAH ASNA, 11
Hubballi, Karnataka

Hope ahead

Turn over the page, leaving nostalgia behind,
Just like how spring blooms flowers,
Forgetting the withered nature of autumn.
Memories are gold, but it's hope that finally shines brighter,
So turn the page, just like turning a new leaf.
Not just a page, but a year of possibilities,
Where dreams turn into reality.
And remember, the pen is yours,
and the story is yours to write!

– S HAMSHIKA, 14
Bengaluru, Karnataka

Lessons within

It's very much joyous,
To open a fresh page,
And go through fresh chapters,
To learn something new at every stage.
Every page has a lesson,
For each and every person,
Filled with moral ethics,
Leading to readers' success.
The useful lessons learned,
May be applied everywhere,
To fulfil life's purpose,
And thus realise dreams.

– DHRUV K, 6
Bengaluru, Karnataka

ART CORNER Love painting?

Want to showcase your flair for colours? Send your paintings on the theme 'Joyful January' to *Open Sesame* and stand a chance to get featured in an upcoming edition. Mail photographs of your work to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in.* Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph of yourself. Entries close on January 15.

This Week:

Prime personage

Open Sesame Quiz

Take the fun Open Sesame quiz, and stand a chance to win gift vouchers worth Rs 500. Open to children below 16 years.

Q1 On January 10, 1966, a day before his sudden passing, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri signed a treaty with the president of a certain country. Who was that head of state?

Q2 Lal Bahadur Shastri had held several cabinet portfolios before he became our second prime minister. Which ministry was he heading when he succeeded Jawaharlal Nehru, in June, 1964?

Q3 Lal Bahadur Shastri was a lifelong member of the Servants of the People Society (SOPS), which trained "national missionaries" to serve the country. Who founded it in 1921?

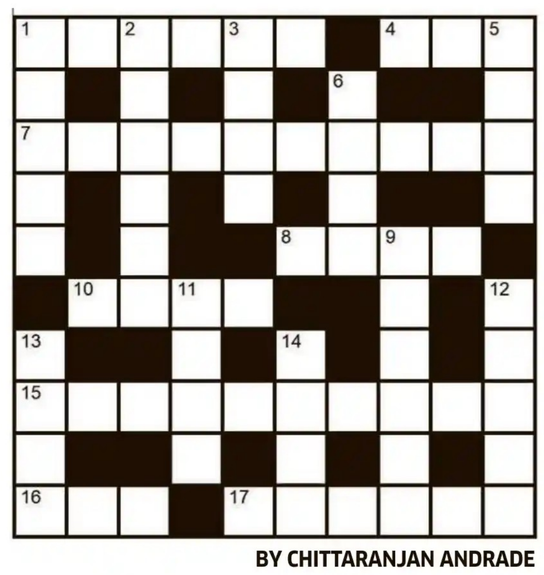
Scan the QR code
Or visit bit.ly/DHopensesame to participate in the quiz.

Q4 **Rhyme Time:** Two clues to which the answers rhyme with each other.
Clue A: Lal Bahadur Shastri's famous 1965 slogan praised soldier and _.
Clue B: Defensive body covering, especially for combat.

Q5 **Clue Cluster:** Which city is home to the airport named after Lal Bahadur Shastri? Use these clues.
a) Ganges
b) Silk
c) Modi
d) Pilgrimage

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: Aswathy (15), Bengaluru; Aarush Malipatil (14), Dharwad; Mani Shankar (16), Bengaluru.

CROSSWORD



BY CHITTARANJAN ANDRADE

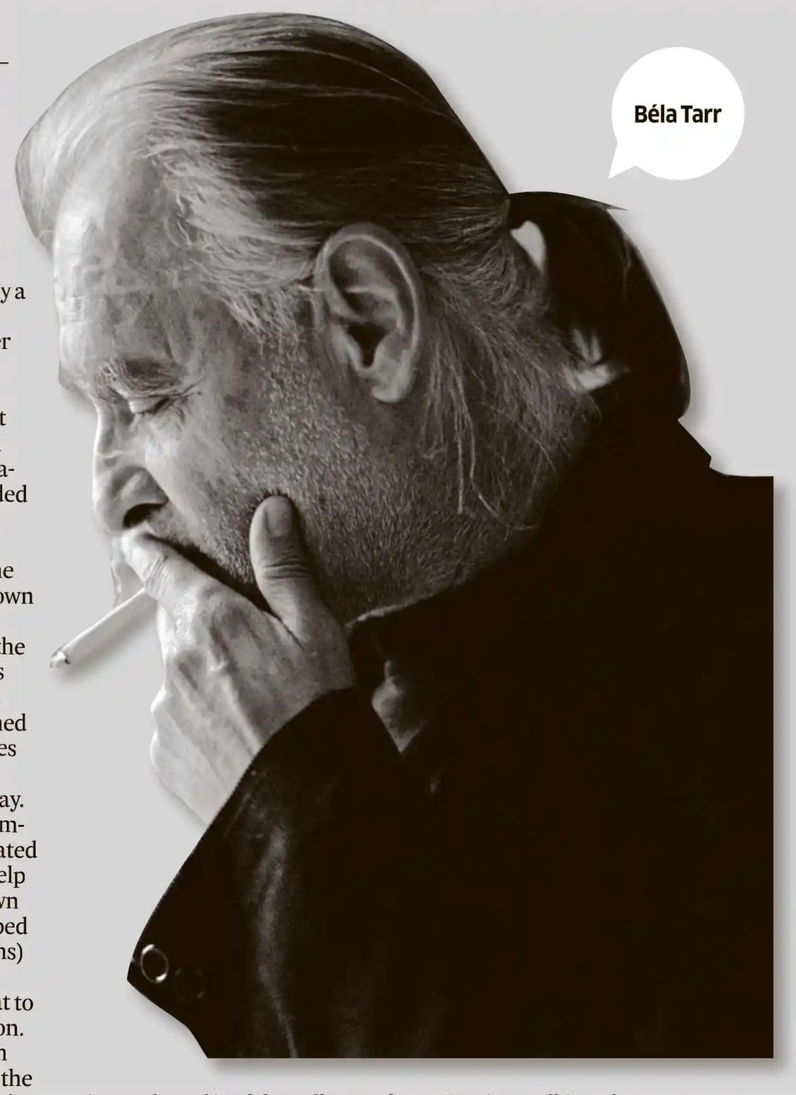
Across
1 Baby sounds (6)
4 Tap fondly (3)
7 What absence makes the heart do (4,6)
8 Loan to be repaid (4)
10 Adroit (4)
15 What a watched pot does (5,5)
16 Sorrow (3)
17 Fatal (6)

Down
1 Loose at the bottom, as in trousers (5)
2 Woman's garment (6)
3 Departed (4)
5 Ripped (4)
6 On a single occasion (4)
9 At the rear (6)
11 Insect on a dog (4)
12 Untidy (5)
13 Chew on (4)
14 Competent (4)

ANSWERS
Across: 1 Babble, 4 Pat, 7 Grow fonder, 8 Debt, 10 Deft, 15 Never boils, 16 Woe, 17 Deadly.
Down: 1 Baggy, 2 Blouse, 3 Left, 5 Tore, 6 Once, 9 Behind, 11 Flea, 12 Messy, 13 Gnaw, 14 Able.

The Hungarian auteur, who died on Tuesday, was known for his slow, lingering takes on political ruin, writes M K Raghavendra

BÉLA TARR
Cinema as enigma



In the haunting film 'Werckmeister Harmonies', an exhibit of a giant carcass of a whale comes across as a strong political metaphor.

Béla Tarr, who died on Tuesday, was arguably one of the two most celebrated Hungarian filmmakers, the other being Miklós Jancsó. Hungarian cinema was the best in eastern Europe and that makes him exceedingly important. Tarr made a reputation with two films 'Satantango' (1994) and 'Werckmeister Harmonies' (2000) but all his films are marked by a profound melancholy arguably provoked by the decline and fall of communism — underway from the 1980s. His use of the uncut sequence in his mise en scène — also like Tarkovksy and Angelopoulos — went beyond maintaining the integrity of space (as by Max Ophuls and Jancsó) and Tarr explained it at the International Film Festival of Kerala 2022 (where he received a Lifetime Achievement Award) as an effort to be true to life since compression is essentially a kind of falsehood.

Tarr is not an easy filmmaker to discuss but after attracting attention with 'Damnation' (1987), which I take to be about stagnation and people stuck in a rut even in their personal relationships. 'Satantango', regarded a masterpiece, is a seven-hour work dealing with the fate of people on a collective farm. The collective farm is being shut down and the people on it have been given a year's wages each. On the morning the story opens, news comes that two others, Irimiás and Petrina, who were presumed dead, are returning. This causes consternation and the two are apparently dreaded in some way. There are other episodes — Irimiás and Petrina being interrogated for being criminals but their help being sought for some unknown purpose, a little girl being robbed of her money (a handful of coins) by her older brother, the girl torturing and poisoning her cat to death and consuming rat poison.

Tarr does not give us enough for us to follow the action, and the conversation is always enigmatic. Irimiás finally arrives and he has a scheme for investing their savings in a new enterprise — which is not strictly legal. Irimiás makes a politician's speech over the little girl's corpse and the general impression gathered is of the collapse of a system, no other options being open and people being persuaded against their better judgement. There are some stunning extended sequences of which the most mysterious shows Irimiás and Petrina walking along a street, their backs to a tracking camera; the wind blows shreds of paper incessantly in the same direction after them. My own reading of it relies on the knowledge that the end of a political system generates wastepaper since files and records are destroyed. Hungary was in a state of economic collapse in the late 1980s and the film was perhaps anticipating its end. As in Russia where a criminal class gained prominence after 1989, we may also see the weakening of the system in Hungary as creating people like Irimiás and Petrina.

Neither 'Damnation' nor 'Satantango' can be read as allegory because they carry the enormous burden of the immediate, but one feels that Tarr's style lends itself naturally to allegory. 'Werckmeister Harmonies' (2000) is a haunting film in black and white and set in a small unnamed town. A circus comes there in the dead of night and its chief exhibit is the giant carcass of a whale. Also advertised alongside the whale and various other marine wonders is a performance from a mysterious person called 'The Prince'. The arrival of the circus is followed by civic disturbances brought about by the incendiary speeches of the Prince, who is never shown.

At the conclusion the stuffed whale, once a mysterious artefact lies in the square, abandoned and clearly a patched-up exhibit. The whale is perhaps an allegory of the original wonderful object associated with the dogma, the sacred object associated with the faith — the stone slabs on which the Commandments were inscribed, the Holy Grail for Christianity, the Black Stone in Mecca for Islam or a cultural object like Marx's Das Kapital for communists. This object is an emblem of the wonder of creation and/or the world and of god's laws. But after the strife initiated by the warrior-prophets has finally concluded and equilibrium is re-established, the sacred object has lost its wonder. The whale is only a profane object now and not an emblem.

A girl with her cat in the seven-hour 'Satantango', Tarr's masterpiece.

Tarr is admired but there have not been any convincing explanations for his films; my own understanding is that they are political. Or, more precisely, they respond to a situation brought about by politics. But Tarr's camera style is hardly the kind associated with political cinema and his films have been loosely categorised as 'metaphysical'. But would the imposition of political ideology upon all aspects of everyday life not have consequences upon the human psyche and, in a sense, engender metaphysical despair? Such a phase would pass and a filmmaker who had invented a kind of cinema style suited to the moment might be handicapped when it passed. After 'Werckmeister Harmonies', Bela Tarr's output was disappointing. 'The Turin Horse' (2011) seemed to be following old habits rather than breaking new ground.

Tarr had great hope in a young Chinese filmmaker he had mentored. Hu Bo made one film 'An Elephant Sitting Still' (2018) about four young people in China left behind by the nation's economic march. But he took his own life at the age of 28 before the film could be released.

(The author is a well-known film critic)

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to dhonsat @deccanherald.co.in

Sriram Raghavan's film Ikkis, now showing, stands out for its humanist vision, writes Samvartha Sahil

A war film with an anti-war message

Agastya Nanda and Jaideep Ahlawat in Ikkis.

In Sriram Raghavan's film 'Ikkis', an angry Pakistani soldier demands that the Indian soldier being 'hosted' by Pakistan be thrown out. He says that a man standing on both legs — the Indian soldier — can't understand the suffering of a man who had lost a leg in the war. The Indian replies, "You lost your leg in the war, and I lost my son," and hugs him. The Pakistani's anger vanishes instantly.

'Ikkis' is like that warm hug to a society being fed jingoistic films. Sriram Raghavan's highly patriotic film triumphs because of its deeply humanist vision, and that vision emerges primarily from its screenwriting.

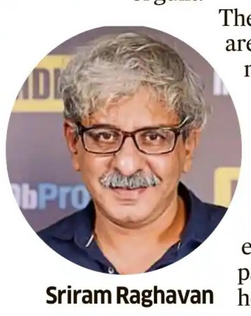
In screenwriting vocabulary, a main character is the person the story is about. A protagonist is a character who is transformed in the course of the story, and the hero is a character the audience roots for. Going by that understanding, Arun (Agastya Nanda) is both the protagonist and the hero of 'Ikkis', and Nisar (Jaideep Ahlawat) is the main character. One is an Indian and the other a Pakistani.

The politics of 'Ikkis' is in telling not just the story of the brave Arun Khetarpal who was martyred in the 1971 war, but also of Jaan Mohammad Nisar, the Pakistani soldier who for 30 years carried the guilt of killing Arun. 'Ikkis' places both the killer and the killed at the centre of the narrative.

The screenplay works on three timelines. The first unfolds in 2001, when Madan Khetarpal (Dharmendra), father of Arun, is on a Pakistan visit for his school reunion. In Lahore, he is hosted by Nisar. The second narrative unfolds in 1971, during the India-Pakistan war in which Arun gets martyred fighting a regiment led by Nisar. The third is from the years of Arun's training. Here his love for Kiran (Simar Bhatia) blossoms and wilts.

The non-linear narrative method employed by the screenwriters (Arijit Biswas, Shriram Raghavan and Pooja Ladha Surti) helps us see the characters as humans who are soldiers and soldiers who are humans.

Just before the climax of the 1971 timeline, where Nisar and Arun face each other on the battlefield, we see a pre-war scene where Kiran breaks up with Arun. Her words nudge him to re-evaluate his approach to life — of blindly prioritising duty.



Sriram Raghavan

He finally prioritises what is right over what he must do to follow orders. And, in the 2001 timeline just before the climax, where Nisar brings Madan to a spot to reveal that he was the one who killed Arun there, we see a scene from 1971 timeline where Nisar learns about the death of Altaf, a fellow soldier and son of his commander in chief. Interestingly, his chief had entrusted Nisar to take care of his son. These two scenes unfolding closely make us understand why Nisar feels guilty about having killed someone's son.

If the film had unfolded in a linear manner, the intertwining of different timelines wouldn't have been evident. Also, the film would become a celebration of a soldier or a saga of guilt.

The timelines are synchronised subtly. When Arun abandons his teammates, his team distances him. When he expresses his pain to Kiran, he is asked to acknowledge his mistakes and apologise to the team. When he does that, the team accepts him back. When Arun throws away his half-written letter to Kiran, he is asked by his friend to acknowledge his mistake, complete the letter and repair his broken relationship.

These relationships suggest that the past can be unburdened with the help of love, truth and genuine intent. This is the film's conversation with the larger politics of hatred, and it makes it stand out from most war films coming out of India.

The humanitarian vision stretches beyond human lives. At Saraj Chak, Arun spots a cat in a building almost destroyed by war. His tank almost runs over a cycle carrying roosters, and one rooster even sits on his tank. There is also Rex, a military working dog, which gets injured and just before Arun's death, a branch catches fire. By depicting these small elements, the screenwriters have punctured narratives that blindfolds the audience to the costs of war.

The film also has three ISI agents. Two of them place a spy mic in Nisar's car and follow him when he drives Madan to his ancestral place in Sargodha. Nisar sees them as duty-bound people, like he once was. In a striking moment, following an intense conversation, Nisar and Madan go silent, and the ISI agent secretly hearing the conversations asks his colleague, "Do people at the HQ listen to silences as well? Or, do they forward it?" 'Ikkis' listens to the silence.

(The author teaches screenwriting)

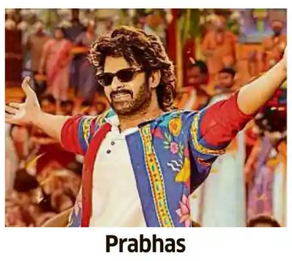
MOVIE REVIEWS

Prabhas's fantasy comedy loud and cringey

PRANATI A S

★★☆☆☆

The Rajasaab
Telugu (Theatres)
Director: Maruthi
Cast: Prabhas, Zarina Wahab, Sanjay Dutt, Malavika Mohanan



Prabhas

In his latest offering, Prabhas plays Raju, a simple young man who lives with his grandmother, Gangamma (Zarina Wahab), an Alzheimer's patient. They live a quiet life until one day when Gangamma sends Raju to look for her husband, Kanakaraju (Sanjay Dutt), who has been missing for about 60 years. Raju's quest for his grandfather takes him to Hyderabad, where he meets Bessie (Nidhhi Agerwal) and falls in love with her. He then meets Bhairavi (Malavika Mohanan), who falls in love with him and joins him in his quest, which leads them to a haunted mansion. It is revealed that Kanakaraju is not as innocent as Gangamma thinks he is, and he harbours some really dark secrets.

While the plot looks interesting, the narrative is all over the place. Director Maruthi tries to bring back pre-Baahubali Prabhas — who did romantic comedies like 'Darling', 'Mr Perfect' and 'Mirchi'. However, it looks like he could not resist the temptation of grand sets, heavy VFX and a narrative driven by divine intervention. If only the audience could have been saved by some kind of intervention!

I fail to understand the need for three heroines in the film — they hardly add anything to the narrative apart from song, dance and glamour. It is even more strange to watch Malavika climbing a hill in a chiffon saree! The haunted mansion is beautifully constructed. However, the jarring VFX makes everything, including the actors, look superficial. Billed as a fantasy horror comedy, 'The Rajasaab' is neither funny nor scary, only loud, cringe-worthy and silly. Neither are the songs entertaining nor the cinematography topnotch. Even Prabhas is not at his best. At three hours and nine minutes, this is a tedious watch.

Bestseller now an insipid watch

SAVITHA KARTHIK

★★★☆☆

People We Meet on Vacation
English (Netflix)
Director: Brett Haley
Cast: Emily Bader, Tom Blyth, Sarah Catherine Hook

Tom Blyth and Emily Bader

A chance encounter between two young people with different temperaments, a "good friends only" phase, vacations to stunning locations, and eventually misunderstandings rearing their head — that's Alex Nilsen and Poppy Wright for you.

Based on a bestseller of the same name written by Emily Henry, the film is your archetypal romcom, bringing to mind films of the same genre. Think 'It Happened One Night', the 'Before' series or better still, 'When Harry Met Sally'. In fact, director Brett Haley has stated that he was inspired by writer Nora Ephron, who wrote, among other things, the 1989 classic, 'When Harry met Sally' (director Rob Reiner).

Plot-wise, Alex and Poppy promise to meet each other and travel every year, no matter what. The film takes us through their different trips non-linearly, including Barcelona, where Alex's brother David is set to get married.

Tom Blyth (of the 2023 Hunger Games movie fame) and American actress Emily Bader play their parts but there's not much to write home about there. Emily Bader has, in interviews, stated that she channeled Meg Ryan for her role as Poppy, but looks like there's still work to do on that front. The film has all the elements that one should look for in a romcom but it still feels like a bit of a slog. All the pop philosophising, with lines like, "there's a thin line between searching and running away," doesn't salvage the film. Watch, if only, for the breeziness and lightness of touch it brings early on.

Wobbly thriller saved by strong leads

RASHMI VASUDEVA

Jon Bernthal and Tessa Thompson play a couple.

★★★☆☆

His & Hers
English (Netflix)
Directors: Anja Marquardt, William Oldroyd
Cast: Tessa Thompson, Jon Bernthal, Marin Ireland

Lead investigators are rarely as adorable as they used to be. Most are mired in existential crises, don't believe in showers, suffer miserable family lives and have insomnia. Yet there's usually a flicker, quirk, a spark, that makes you tolerate them, sometimes even root for them, warts and all. Rarely do you outright dislike one.

This is where 'His & Hers' diverged, at least for me. Small-town detective Jack was intensely annoying from the very start. So was the first episode. Annoying but in a compulsive, can't-look-away kind of way. As the title suggests, this is a thriller that rocks like a see-saw between two perspectives. The mood is persistently uneasy, and its world rests on crumbling moral scaffolding, with cruelty simmering just beneath the surface. Adapted from Alice Feeney's novel, it stars the magnificent Tessa Thompson as Anna, a TV journalist whose career has stalled after a personal tragedy. Jack (Jon Bernthal) is her estranged husband, investigating the murder of a young woman — the case that draws Anna back to her hometown.

Since we believe in spoiler-free reviews, let's say the shifts in perspective and who gets to tell the story matter most in this dark thriller.

The writing isn't always smooth, and the plot occasionally knots itself up in its own twists. But it is never dull, especially with two accomplished leads operating at the top of their game. Tessa infuses her role with taut, charged sexuality, while Jon plays Jack as both infuriating and calculating. Watch it for the undercurrents.

Ruling Star wins Kamilah Cup

KOLKATA RESULTS

Lesser fancied Ruling Star, from the stables of Deepesh Narred and ridden by RS Bhati, won the Kamilah Cup, the feature event of the Kolkata races on Friday.

1. Agostine Handicap - 1100M: Memphis (MS Deora) 1; Elusive Ranger (Chetan Gowda) 2; Diamond Gold (Sai Kumar) 3; Horus The Great (Vishal Bunde) 4; WB: 3/4, 1/2, 1L; T: 1:06.73; TB: Javed Khan; Fav: Memphis.

2. Acrider Handicap - 1600M: Divine Gift (Antony Raj) 1; Righteous (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Carnation (Vishal Bundel) 3; Schwarzenegger (MS Deora) 4; WB: 4, 1-1/2L, Lnk; T: 1:41.34; TB: Vijay Singh; Fav: Carnation.

3. Kamilah Handicap - 2000M: Ruling Star (RS Bhati) 1; Whirlwind (MS Deora) 2; Golden Warrior (Suraj Narredu) 3; Natural Grace (Antony Raj) 4; WB: Shd, 1-1/2L, Dist; T: 2:06.89; TB: Deepesh Narredu; Fav: Ruling Star.

4. Fortune Cup - 1600M: Togo (Suraj Narredu) 1; Don'tstopthemusic (Vishal Bunde) 2; Magnifico (Mukesh Kumar) 3; Cortado (Imran Chisty) 4; WB: 2-3/4, Snk, 3-1/4L; T: 1:39.26; TB: Neil Darashah; Fav: Togo.

5. Malpensa Cup - 2400M: Black Diamond (Suraj Narredu) 1; Garth (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Sanaya (Vaibhav) 3; Oromelo (MS Deora) 4; WB: 3/4, 1-3/4L, 9-3/4L; T: 2:35.52; TB: Deepesh Narredu; Fav: Sanaya.

6. Violin Handicap (Div I) - 1400M: Only Dreams (Mukesh Kumar) 1; Paulite Warrior (Antony Raj) 2; Global Fashion (MS Deora) 3; Enchanting (Imran Chisty) 4. WB: 1/2, 1-1/4L, Hd; T: 1:26.84; TB: Aashay Doctor; Fav: Paulite Warrior.

7. Violin Handicap (Div II) - 1400M: Cash N Run (Vishal Bunde) 1; Mrs Brando (Vinod Shinde) 2; Immortal Beauty (Suraj Narredu) 3; Brave Majesty (Vaibhav) 4; WB: 7-1/4, 1-1/2, 2-1/4L; T: 1:24.39; TB: Sabeel Shariff; Fav: Mrs Brando.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 19w; 10, 17, 12p; Fc: Rs 182; Q: Rs 146; Shp: Rs 84; Thp: Rs 26; Tri: Rs 590 & 236; Ex: Rs 1,689 & 397.

II race: Rs 56w; 18, 12p; Fc: Rs 212; Q: Rs 60; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 34; Tri: Rs 176 & 77; Ex: Rs 274 & 268.

III race: Rs 136w; 18, 10p; Fc: Rs 420; Q: Rs 104; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 26; Tri: Rs 300 & 96.

IV race: Rs 16w; 10, 11, 13p: Fc: Rs 61; Q: Rs 68; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 35; Tri: Rs 204 & 39; Ex: Rs 356 & 204.

V race: Rs 26w; 14, 17p; Fc: Rs 67; Q: Rs 32; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 29; Tri: Rs 63 & 23; Ex: Rs 183 & 110.

VI race: Rs 32w; 14, 13, 14p; Fc: Rs 69; Q: Rs 40; Shp: Rs 33; Thp: Rs 32; Tri: Rs 166 & 155; Ex: Rs 500 & 239.

VII race: Rs 21w; 12, 16, 15p; Fc: Rs 152; Q: Rs 63; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 50; Tri: Rs 333 & 83; Ex: Rs 2,981 & 1,281.

Jackpot: Rs 27,006 (14).

Runner-up: Rs 1,724 (94).

I treble: Rs 1,339 (36).

II treble: Rs 645 (147).

Fynbos for India Oaks

MUMBAI SELECTIONS

Fynbos, from the stables of Pesi Shroff, will garner the maximum support in the Villoo C Poonawalla Indian Oaks, the feature event of the Mumbai races to be run over distance of mile and a half at the races on Saturday. The first race starts at 1 pm.

1. Isn't She Special Trophy - 1600M: Miracle Of Hanukah 1, Break Point 2, Treat 3.

2. Potential Champion Trophy - 1600M: El Greco 1, Pride's Prince 2, Chagall 3.

3. Pleasure Hunt Trophy - 1000M: Social Butterfly 1, Fighton 2, Big Bay 3.

4. Tricumdas Dwarkadas Trophy (Div I) - 1200M: Skandha 1, El Moran 2, Juracan 3.

5. Gool S Poonawalla Million - 1200M: Puccini 1, Starlight Serenade 2, Nebula 3.

6. Ramnivas Ramnarain Ruia Gold Cup - 2000M: Baychimo 1, Red Bishop 2, Zacharias 3.

7. Villoo C Poonawalla Indian Oaks - 2400M: Fynbos 1, Ravishing Beauty 2, Dreamer 3.

8. Tricumdas Dwarkadas Trophy (Div II) - 1200M: Appalachian 1, Manwar 2, Red Dust 3.

9. Marchetta Trophy - 1400M: Maratha Admiral 1, Ministry Of Time 2, Wrangler 3.

Day's best: Baychimo.

I jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6.

II jackpot: 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9. **I treble:** 3, 4 & 5.**II treble:** 6, 7 & 8.

III treble: 7, 8 & 9.

Sonakshi leads 1-2 for Karnataka women

BENGALURU, DHNS: Dimple Sonakshi M Gowda led a Karnataka 1-2 in the women's 10 km race on the opening day of the SFI Open Water National Championship at Thanirbhavi Beach in Mangaluru on Friday.

Sonakshi clocked 2:36.52 to claim the gold, ahead of silver medallist Kushika R (2:43.25). Telangana's Vritti Agarwal came third with a timing of 2:48.21.

There was a podium sweep for Karnataka in the boys' Group 1 km race. Bhavik Agarwal (11:56) bagged gold, Kushal B Gowda (11:59) took silver while Shan AR shared the bronze with Tamil Nadu's Tanuj Sundar with both swimmers clocking 11:59.30.

Results: Men: 10 km: Kushagra Rawat (Del) 2:26.13, 1; Advait Page (MP) 2:26.13, 2; Alaistar Samuel Rego (Kar) 2:28.16, 3.

Boys: Group 3: 5 km: Kabilan Tamilselva (TN) 1:16:03, 1; Daksh Prasad (Kar) 1:16:04, 2; Aarav J (Kar) 1:16:07, 3.

Group 5: 1 km: Bhavik Agarwal (Kar) 11:56, 1; Kushal B Gowda (Kar) 11:59.0, Tanuj Sundar (TN) & Shan AR (Kar) 11:59.30, 3.

Women: 10 km: Dimple Sonakshi M Gowda (Kar) 2:36.52, 1; Kushika R (Kar) 2:43.26, 2; Vritti Agarwal (Tel) 2:48.21, 3.

Girls: Group 3: 5 km: Nenya Vijaykumar (TN) 1:23.23, 1; Syna Pancholi (MP) 1:25.15, 2; Sahana Shree D (Kar) 1:28.15, 3.

Group 5: 1 km: Nihara Mahesh (TN) 12.23, 1; Vivaanya Aravinda (Kar) 12.35, 2; Saanvi R (Kar) 13.29, 3.

FOOTBALL

Real edge Atletico to set up Clasico

Valverde, Rodrygo instrumental in 2-1 triumph

JEDDAH, AFP

Xabi Alonso's Real Madrid beat Atletico Madrid 2-1 in a tight Spanish Super Cup semifinal in Saudi Arabia on Thursday to set up a Clasico final clash against rivals Barcelona.

Fede Valverde's blistering free-kick and a Rodrygo Goes strike helped Madrid claim a fifth consecutive victory across all competitions, with Alexander Sorloth pulling one back for Diego Simeone's Atletico, who came up short in Jeddah.

Alonso was close to the sack after a run of inconsistent form towards the end of 2025 but his team has slowly found its footing in the shape of positive results, even if some performances have not been entirely convincing.

The Spanish coach led Madrid to a win over Barcelona in his first Clasico at the helm in October, before his team began to slump.

"After so many games without scoring, today was a great game to get back to it, to help the team win," Valverde told Movistar after netting his first goal of the campaign.

"We have to keep being self-critical too, we had chances but they had more and played much better than us, we have to keep correcting that and improving." Alonso did not agree with Valverde's analysis.

"It's a semifinal, having scored early gives you that advantage that you want to defend," said the coach.

"There were phases where we were defending but the objective was to go through to the final, and we're happy to be playing that on Sunday."

With French superstar Kylian Mbappe out as he recovers from a knee sprain, Alonso kept young striker Gonzalo Garcia in the centre of the attack after his hat-trick against Real Betis on Sunday.

Atletico beat their city rivals 5-2 when the teams met in September in a La Liga derby but this was a far closer affair.

Los Blancos took the lead after just two minutes when Valverde's ferocious free-kick flew past Sorloth in a poorly-positioned wall and rocketed past Jan Oblak.

The Norwegian Atletico forward might have done more to block it and Oblak got his hand to the shot but could not keep it out because of the sheer power.

Valverde celebrated vehemently, slapping his own head, clearly delighted at breaking his duck in a difficult season to date.

By taking the lead Real Madrid earned the right to sit deeper and force Atletico to try and attack them to pull back level. Madrid hit the Rojiblancos when they could on the counter, with Oblak saving well from Rodrygo after he floated inside from the right.

Atletico began to create some chances and could have pulled level before the interval.

Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois tipped away Sorloth's header and then the target man clumsily nodded Conor Gallagher's cross off-target from close range.

Real Madrid's Rodrygo (right) celebrates with Gonzalo Garcia after scoring their second goal in the Super Cup semifinal against Atletico Madrid in Jeddah on Thursday. REUTERS

Arsenal's Martinelli 'deeply sorry' after backlash

LONDON, AFP: Arsenal winger Gabriel Martinelli said he had apologised to Conor Bradley for shoving the Liverpool defender off the pitch when badly injured in a 0-0 Premier League draw.

Some pundits felt Martinelli should have been sent off after the Brazilian dropped the ball on Bradley as he lay on the turf at the Emirates and then tried to manhandle him off the pitch so the game could quickly resume.

The 22-year-old Bradley left the stadium on crutches and wearing a supportive brace on his knee.

Martinelli was booked but not dismissed following the incident late in the game on Thursday which provoked an angry reaction from Liverpool's players. Former Manchester United captain Roy Keane called Martinelli "a disgrace" on Sky Sports.

In response to the backlash, Martinelli posted on Instagram: "Conor and I have messaged and I've already apologised to him.

"I really didn't understand he was seriously injured in the heat of the moment.

Pedro lives up to his top billing

Balaji and partner Oberleitner lose in doubles semis

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Spain's Pedro Martinez justified his top billing at the Bengaluru Open as he saw off France's Matteo Martineau 7-6 (4), 6-1 to reach the final at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium on Friday.

Pedro will square off against sixth seed Kazakh Timofey Skatov, who made a strong case for the marquee clash with a straight set victory over second seed Frenchman Harold Mayot 6-4, 6-3.

Meanwhile, India went title-less at the ATP 125 Challenger as top seeds N Sriram Balaji and his Austrian partner Neil Oberleitner lost 6-7 (4), 6-7 (3) to third seeds Arthur Reymond and Luca Sanchez.

The winning French duo will be up in the final against fourth-seeded Colombian-American pair Nicolas Barrientos and Benjamin Kittay, who defeated Dutch duo of Max Houkes, Niels Visker 7-6 (6), 6-3.

Dominating court

In the first singles semifinal, World No. 96 Pedro, the sole top-100 player in the tournament, displayed some top-quality tennis to entertain the Bengaluru crowd while his No. 319 opponent lacked the consistent game to match it. Saying that, 26-year-old Matteo had his moments in the game as his strong retrieval game, which was on display during his straight-set victory over Manas Dhamne the other day, troubled the 28-year-old Spaniard with a break in the sixth game.

The Frenchman surprised the charging Pedro with some brilliant winners while looking for ways to take charge of the court when the match was largely devoid of any rallies.

Matteo, however, knew he had no choice but to keep up with his big serves against a quality rival, who was aggressive on the baseline. Perhaps thinking too much about it affected his game as he started struggling with his serves exactly when he needed to hold on to it.

This allowed Pedro to pounce on his growing concerns and level the point with some excellent returns, followed by quick presumed court coverage to deliver the blow.

This certainly became the turning point of the match as Pedro, who by now was serving to the T with conviction, attacked the one-handed backhander to his left more with every intention to dominate the court as the returns were easier to control.

The gulf in class became apparent in the tie-breaker as Pedro took points quickly with his big serves while making the most of the self-doubting Frenchman, who was struggling to find rhythm in his service toss as well, to open up a three set points opportunity before closing the game on the return.

The Spaniard became a different beast in the second set as he dictated terms at will, breaking an ever-doubting Frenchman off consecutive service games while hardly breaking any sweat to take the set and match at 6-1.

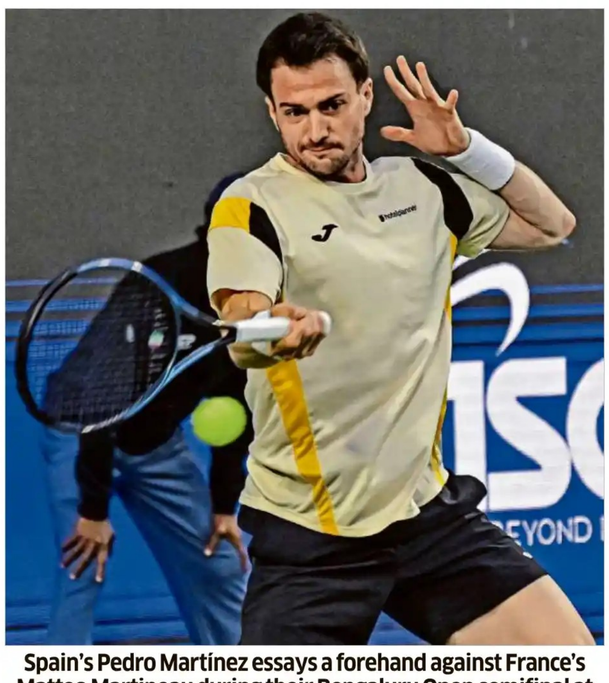
In the other semifinal, world No. 235 Skatov continued his spotless run in the event to reach the final with another straight-set victory while seeing off Mayot (No. 167).

Aware of Mayot's left-hand wrist injury, which has restricted his backhand returns to either slices or blocks, Skatov took an aggressive route to make him uncomfortable and did just enough to break him once in each set.

Ever-fighting Mayot did come strong late in the second set looking for a break but failed to capitalise on it with the Kazakh not in the mood for any further let off.

Results: Semifinals: Singles (prefix denotes seeding): 1-Pedro Martinez (ESP) bt Martin Martineau (Fra) 7-6 (4), 6-1; 6-Timofey Skatov (Kaz) bt 2-Harold Mayot (Fra) 6-4, 6-3.

Doubles: 3-Arthur Reymond/ Luca Sanchez (Fra) bt 1-N Sriram Balaji (Ind)/ Neil Oberleitner (Aut) 7-6 (4), 7-6 (3); 4-Nicolas Barrientos (Col)/ Benjamin Kittay (USA) bt Max Houkes/ Niels Visker (Ned) 7-6 (6), 6-3.



Spain's Pedro Martínez essays a forehand against France's Matteo Martineau during their Bengaluru Open semifinal at SM Krishna Tennis Stadium on Friday. DH PHOTO/ PUSHKAR V

Nihal holds Anand to clinch Rapid title

KOLKATA, PTI

Young Indian Grandmaster Nihal Sarin emerged champion at the Tata Steel Chess India tournament on Friday, clinching the Rapid title just a day after the passing of his maternal grandfather, who had introduced him to the sport.

Nihal sealed the 'Open' title in Round 9 with a calm draw against five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand. The result confirmed the 21-year-old Nihal's first-place finish with 6.5 points.

Anand took the second spot with six points, while Arjun Erigaisi, a double bronze medallist at the World Rapid and Blitz Championships in Doha recently, completed the podium with with five points.

"Yesterday night I got the news that my maternal grandmaster who taught me chess, had passed away. I would like to dedicate this tournament victory to him," Nihal said.

In the women's section, Russia's Kateryna Lagno emerged victorious with 6.5 points following a commanding performance. Aleksandra Goryachkina, also from Russia, took the second spot with five points, while Women's World Cup champion Divya Deshmukh (4.5 points) finished with a bronze.

Earlier in Round 7 former World Rapid champion Volodar Murzin scored his first win in the event against China's Wei Yi.

Nihal Sarin (right) sealed the title with a draw against five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand in Kolkata on Friday. PTI

Lowly 'tricks in FC Deccan's win

BENGALURU, DHNS: LT Lowly flew high on a hat-trick during FC Deccan's 4-1 victory over Real Chikkamagaluru FC at the BDFA A Division Football League Championship here at the Bangalore Football Stadium on Friday.

Results: A Division: Blitz FC: 4 (Siju Rajan George 8th, Avishek S Kulkarni 59th, B Mantongje 63rd, 90+3rd) bt Jawahar Union FC: 2 (Muhammed Jasil K 7th, Lal miLian 81st); FC Deccan: 4 (LT Lowly 6th, 61st, 90th+5, Sai Srujan S 25th) bt Real Chikkamagaluru FC: 1 (Sjova Liar 23rd); **\B Division (Group B):** Mysore Vijayanagar FC: 4 (Midhun Ravi 50th, 69th, Mayur Kshetragna 57th, C Rishabh Cariappa 73rd) bt Pillanna Garden FC: 2 (Gasper Anthony 23rd, 62nd).

Samarth, Gagan shine as CC XI bag innings honours

BENGALURU, DHNS: Samarth Suresh cracked a fine double hundred while Gagan R Metre mustered a solid hundred to help Combined City XI take three points in their drawn encounter against Mangalore Zone in their KSCA Under-14 Inter-Zonal tournament here.

LOCAL CRICKET

Combined City XI, riding on knocks from Saachin (225) and Gagan (156) posted 492 for seven in 90 overs. Tanay S Bangera was the pick of the Mangalore bowlers, returning with a 3/83.

In reply, Mangalore Zone were cheaply bowled out for 182 in 82.3 overs, with Ibrahim Khan (3/27), Ved Nahar (2/37) and Laksh Manickam (2/24) sharing seven wickets between them.

In their second essay, CC XI scored 47/2 with Krishna unbeaten on 34.

Brief scores: Combined City XI: 492/7 in 90 overs (Saachin Suresh Araganji 33, Samarth Suresh 225, Gagan R Metre 156, Hrithvik Shetty 37 n.o., Tanay S Bangera 3-83) & 47/2 in 11 overs (Krishna 34 n.o.) drew with Mangalore Zone: 182 all out in 82.3 overs (Mohammed Rishan Sheik 39, Manyath S Shetty 36, Vruthan NA 32, Ibrahim Khan 3-27, Ved Nahar 2-37, Laksh Manickam 2-24). **Combined City XI : 3 points; Mangalore Zone: 1 pt.**

President's XI: 365/3 in 90 overs (Prabhav Pydah 198 n.o., Ryan Tomar 39, Aaryan Nagesh 106) drew with Dharwad Zone: 245/9 in 90 overs (Ajay A Lamani 51, Mohammed Hamza Saraff 61, Shivam S Katwe 34 n.o., Aniket Chaturvedi 5-10, M Neeraj 2-45). **President's XI: 3; Dharwad Zone: 1.**

Shivamogga Zone: 307/5 in 90 overs (Shourya K 155, Adarsh Hitthadi VH 35, Utsav Gowda DS 46 n.o.; Ashith Sanjay Girish 3-44) & 19/1 in 4 overs drew with Tumkur Zone: 206 all out in 86.1 overs (Abdul Raheem 61, Aayat Rahim Khan 29, Pranav Murthy 63, Mayur N 3-12, Rathan P 2-28, Smaran Chiranjeevi 3-33). **Shivamogga Zone: 3; Tumkur Zone: 1.**

Bangalore City XI : 302 all out in 78 overs (Akhilesh Yadav M 81, Ashwath Nagarajan 118; Samrat Aditya P 3-99, Vyom Naidu 4-50) & 97/6 in 27.4 overs (Sachith Shetty 60; Sharav Chetan Koundinya 2-33, Vyom Naidu 2-38, Gagan P Maiya 2-14) drew with Vice President's XI: 228 all out in 81.2 overs (Athreya Bhat 61, Gagan P Maiya 40, Hridaan Sai 32, Aadit Kaul 29; Jeet D 5-28, Tejas Sudhindra Bhat 2-10, Ishaanth Y 2-39). **Bangalore City XI: 3; Vice President's XI: 1.**

Raichur Zone : 256/9 in 90 overs (Tejas 67, Raghav K Kumar 26, Athmik Pujari 58, Prajwal Mallikarjun 27 n.o.; Bhavin Joe Francis 2-43, Sai Yashmith Selapaka 3-55, Krishav Karthik 3-45) & 31 for no loss in 10 overs drew with Bangalore Zone: 324/3 in 90 overs (Jashwanth M 101, Aarav Srivastava 59, Akhieera Allan W 104, Krishav Karthik 34 n.o.). **Bangalore Zone: 3; Raichur Zone: 1.**

Secretary's XI: 121 all out in 44.5 overs (Cheran Tej Raju C 26, Sachit S Galatagi 41; Swaroop H 2-28, Benaka R Gowda 4-40, Samay Jayashankar 2-4) & 187/8 in 69 overs (K Hrithik Polin 69, Keerthan Raghu 25; Benaka R Gowda 4-50) drew with Mysore Zone: 143 all out in 78.2 overs (Swaroop H 41, Likith CK 25 n.o., Cheran Tej Raju C 2-34, Gaurav V 3-14, Vishist PJ 3-26, Meghan KJ 2-21). **Mysore Zone: 3; Secretary's XI : 1.**

KSA conducts biomechanical assessment camp

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka Swimming Association (KSA) recently conducted a four-day biomechanical assessment camp where 20 swimmers underwent a detailed analysis at the Centre for Excellence (CSE) campus.

This was the first time in India that a state swimming association conducted a detailed, quantitative biomechanical assessment as part of a structured performance programme.

The camp, conducted in association with Swimple Sport Lab, was done keeping in mind the upcoming Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Niels De Boer, head coach of Hellas-Glana, a top-three team competing in the Dutch First Division, oversaw the camp.

Key performance indicators (KPIs), including stroke length and stroke rate, wall contact time during turns, take-off angle and entry angle during starts, deepest point reached underwater, underwater trajectory and efficiency and consistency across repeated trials were measured during the camp.

"My first impression of the young swimmers in Bangalore is very positive. There is a strong level of enthusiasm, motivation and natural talent," said De Boer, a former Dutch national champion.

Jadumani floors Panghal; Nikhat, Lovlina into finals

GREATER NOIDA, PTI: Promising youngster Jadumani Singh **(in pic)** upstaged seasoned campaigner Amit Panghal to storm into the final, while star boxers Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain stayed on course for gold with semifinal wins at the National Championships here on Friday.

The 21-year-old Jadumani (55kg) relied on relentless aggression, speed and punch volume to clinch a unanimous 5-0 verdict over two-time Olympian and world championships silver medallist Panghal.

Both boxers, representing the Services Sports Control Board, have moved up from the non-Olympic 50kg category and were involved in a high-intensity, fast-paced contest.

Jadumani took control from the opening round, working effectively at close range and unleashing flurries from all angles, while Panghal banked on accuracy and counter-punching.

All five judges awarded the opening round to the Manipuri, whose pressure told as the bout wore on. Panghal struggled to match Jadumani's stamina and absorbed sustained punishment, losing his gum shield at one stage and suffering a cut as the younger boxer's power became increasingly evident

Boxers hit with logistical issues

Boxers, coaches and team officials from several state units were asked to vacate their allotted accommodation at the ongoing National Boxing Championships here on Friday, triggering fresh logistical concerns at the event, reports PTI.

The issue surfaced for the second consecutive day, with several officials claiming they were informed that their room bookings had not been confirmed for the final three days of the tournament. Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, Tamil Nadu were some of the teams that reported the issue.

Blaze CC, Hosakote post easy win over Youth Cricket Club

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a match dominated by bowlers, Blaze CC, Hosakote came out comfortable winners against Youth CC in a KSCA Group I, V Division league-cum-knockout tournament for the JB Mallaradhya Shield here.

Gunashekar S shone the brightest for Blaze with a five-wicket haul (5/33) as Youth CC crumbled to 75 all out in 22.1 overs while chasing a target of 110. Shreyas Kumar K (2/15) and R Jagadish (2/18) also got amongst wickets for the winners.

Brief scores: Blaze CC, Hosakote: 109 all out in 29.3 overs (Ramana MN 3-34, Surya Kiran K 2-16, Mounesh-kumar Reddy 3-18) bt Youth CC: 75 all out in 22.1 overs (Gunashekar S 5-33, Shreyas Kumar K 2-15, R Jagadish 2-8).

Vivekanagar Cricketers: 354 all out in 47.3 overs (Tanmay Muduli 25, Dinesh S 81, Ravi M 30, M Kishore 52, Nikhil Lal 66, Manu AG 54; Bheemaraya 3-52, Vinay Chandra BR 2-41, Suhaan Bhandary 2-49) bt Kengeri Cricketers: 210 all out in 43 overs (Aadvik Sharmod 74, Suhaan Bhandary 62; Inbarasaganan Bharathi 3-37, Rahul HS 2-47).

IISC Gymkhana: 94 all out in 29 overs (Sumanth N 30; Aldo Clifton L 4-16, Marshal Ronaldo 2-11, S Sarana 3-26) bt St. Joseph's College: 90 all out in 25.2 overs (Aadil Bashir Dar 2-24, Annepu Guna Sai Charan 2-30, Sudarshana Chaitanya BN 3-10, Sumanth N 2-9). .

Diamond CC: 278 all out in 43.5 overs (Sandeep Ramesh 65, Daivik D Nayak 40, Aadrith 44, Rajath Bhat HR 63; Gokul Sai Shashank Sunkara 2-61, Rishab Subherwal 2-35, Prasada 2-26) bt United Cricketers: 231 all out in 41.3 overs (Ishaan Bohra 60, Raunak 52; Vishal Balgopal 3-55, Aadrith 2-16, Dinesh Raju S 3-36, Kaushik Neergunda 2-51).

Young Cricketers Association, Kolar: 215 all out in 37.4 overs (S Pavan Kumar 48, Naga Dilip AV 48, Monish Karthik R 55; Vishwanth Yadav A 3-42, B Mahesh 4-59, Lokesh R 2-31) bt Shanthinagar Cricketers: 99 all out in 29.1 overs (Lokesh R 47, Yashwanth N Reddy 25; Hemanth PS 3-14, S Pavan Kumar 2-40).

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SCAN TO EXPLORE MATTRESS COLLECTION

SG Pipers' skipper Navneet Kaur will be looking to lead her side from the front in the WHIL final against Shrachi Bengal Tigers.

Pipers, Tigers battle for WHIL crown

RANCHI, PTI : SG Pipers and Shrachi Bengal Tigers will lock horns in the Women's Hockey India League final here on Saturday after two weeks of high-octane action featuring 12 matches.

The winner of the league will receive Rs 1.5 crore in prize money, while the runner-up will take home Rs 1 crore.

Ranchi Royals, who finished third, will be awarded Rs 50 lakh.

The finalists, with fairly similar playing styles, held their own in what was a highly competitive season.

While SG Pipers topped the table, Shrachi Bengal Tigers sealed the second spot.

The top two teams faced off twice in the league stage, with Shrachi Bengal Tigers clinching a penalty shootout win on both occasions.

After a 3-3 draw in their first match, the Tigers went on to secure a 4-3 win in the shootout. In the second game, they prevailed 7-6 in the shootout after a goalless draw.

In the men's event, JSW Soorma Club registered a thrilling 3-1 shootout victory against Hyderabad Toofans after a 1-1 stalemate in the regulation time while Tamil Nadu Dragons also clinched a crucial bonus point after edging past SG Pipers in a shootout following a high-scoring 4-4 stalemate.

CRICKET WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE

De Klerk does it for RCB

All-rounder stars with bat & ball in three-wicket win over Mumbai Indians

NAVI MUMBAI, PTI

After claiming 4/26, Nadine de Klerk scored an unbeaten 63 to power Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a thrilling win over Mumbai Indians in their WPL opener in Navi Mumbai on Friday. X

South African star Nadine de Klerk's stunning all-round show powered Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a sensational three-wicket win over defending champions Mumbai Indians in the opening match of the Women's Premier League (WPL) here on Friday.

The 25-year-old all-rounder snapped four wickets for 26 runs, helping RCB restrict MI to 154 for 6 after opting to field, and then snatched victory from the jaws of defeat, hitting unbeaten 63 off 44 balls (7 fours and 2 sixes) in a dramatic run chase.

Chasing 155 for a win, RCB were 137 for 7, needing 18 runs from the final over. De Klerk hit a six and a four from the third and fourth deliveries, needing eight runs from the last two balls. She struck a six off the penultimate delivery and then despatched the last ball from Nat Sciver-Brunt for a four to complete a dramatic win.

RCB reached 157 for 7 in 20 overs with Prema Rawat also remaining not out on 8.

For MI, Nicola Carey and Amelia Kerr grabbed two wickets apiece while Nat Sciver-Brunt, Shabnim Ismail and Amanjot Kaur picked up one each.

RCB suffered a batting collapse after strong show from openers Smriti Mandhana and Grace Harris in a match that saw fortunes fluctuate.

RCB were 47 for 2 at the end of the fifth over but collapsed to 65 for 5 in the eighth over, losing three quick wickets in 2.4 overs.

Harris (25 off 12 balls) and Smriti Mandhana (18 off 13 balls) hit a four each off Sciver-Brunt in the first over, and then repeated the same against Shabnim Ismail as RCB raced to 20 for no loss at the end of the second over.

But the third over was even more damaging for MI as the RCB opening pair helped themselves with 20 runs off a hapless Nicola Carey. Harris hit a six and a four while Mandhana struck two boundaries.

Mandhana looked to be in good touch but suddenly got out in the fourth over. Shabnim Ismail denied her any run in the first four balls of the fourth over and the Mandhana went for a shot in the fifth only to hand a catch to the mid on fielder.

Next over Harris was also out off the bowling of Sciver-Brunt. Harris checked her shot off a slower delivery and ended up offering a fairly regulation catch at long on. RCB lost two big wickets in quick succession.

Brief scores: Mumbai Indians: 154/6 in 20 overs (Gunalan Kamalini 32, Sajeevan Sajana 45, Nicola Carey 40; Nadine de Klerk 4-26) lt to Royal Challengers Bengaluru: 157/7 in 20 overs (Grace Harris 25, Nadine de Klerk 63 n.o.; Amelia Kerr 2-13, Nicola Carey 2-25). **Result:** RCB won by 3 wkts. **PoM:** Nadine de Klerk.

Warriorz, Giants eye strong start

NAVI MUMBAI, PTI: A fresh chapter beckons UP Warriorz and Gujarat Giants as the two sides open their Women's Premier League campaign here on Saturday, both sides chasing a maiden title after contrasting runs in the previous season.

UP Warriorz will lean heavily on new captain Meg Lanning, under whose leadership Delhi Capitals reached three consecutive finals, to arrest a steady slide that has seen the team finish third, fourth and then bottom of the table across the first three seasons.

The Australian great's arrival is expected to bring clarity and calm to a side that struggled for balance and consistency last year in the absence of skipper Alyssa Healy. However, questions remain around the Warriorz's squad composition, particularly in the wicket-keeping department, where Shipra Giri is the lone specialist option.

At the top, Phoebe Litchfield provides flexibility, with the possibility of partnering Kiran Navgire. The middle order, featuring Lanning and Harleen Deol, will be central to setting up competitive totals.

RCB inspect Pune stadium for IPL matches

Raipur, Indore remain franchise's other main options

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

The frenetic developments over the last week indicate that defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru are seriously exploring other venues to host their share of the Indian Premier League matches in the forthcoming season.

The 19th edition of the league commences on March 26.

While the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Cricket Stadium in Raipur reportedly remains a favoured venue for the Bengaluru franchise, just ahead of the Holkar Stadium in Indore, the Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA) has revealed talks with both RCB and Rajasthan Royals to host their home fixtures at the MCA International Stadium in Gahunje in Pune.

In a statement, the MCA expressed gratitude towards both franchises for showing interest and taking the time to visit the stadium.

"We extend our sincere thanks to Royal Challengers Bangalore and Rajasthan Royals for visiting MCA International Stadium, Gahunje, Pune a couple of weeks back. Their presence marks a significant step in showcasing the MCA International Stadium, Pune, as a premier destination for top-tier cricketing events," MCA said on X.

"Considering BCCI's support for the Maharashtra Cricket Association, we are sure that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will approve the MCA International Stadium as a venue for upcoming fixtures of one of these teams in the near future," it added.

For the unversed, the Karnataka State Cricket Association's (KSCA) efforts to bring high-profile cricket back to the M Chinnaswamy Stadium have so far failed to convince an adamant government which has placed a blanket ban on big-ticket cricket following the June 4 stampede last year.

The newly-elected KSCA officials, under its president Venkatesh Prasad, held talks with CM Siddaramaiah, his deputy DK Shivakumar, Home Minister G Parameshwara, besides high-ranking police officials and other key government agencies, but couldn't obtain permission to host Delhi's Vijay Hazare Trophy matches that would have seen Virat Kohli return to the venue for the first time after June 4.

IN BRIEF

Champions chess meet on Jan 25

▸ Champions Chess Academy will be conducting rapid chess tournament on January 25 in U-10 and 16 categories at its facility in Krishna Garden Layout, Raja Rajeswarinagar, reports DHNS

Last date for registration is Jan 23. For details, visit www. championschessacademy.com or call Balakrishna Prabhu (9845466416).

Man City sign Semenyo

▸ Manchester City added to their attacking arsenal on Friday with the signing of Antoine Semenyo from Bournemouth for a reported £65 million ($87 million), reports AFP from Manchester.

The 26-year-old has scored 10 Premier League goals this season.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

Women's Premier League: Gujarat Giants vs UP Warriorz **(3:30 pm)**, Mumbai Indians vs Delhi Capitals **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

FA Cup: Macclesfield vs Crystal Palace, Everton vs Sunderland **(both 5:45 pm)**, Man City vs Exeter City **(8:30 pm)**, Tottenham vs Aston Villa **(11:25 pm)**, Charlton vs Chelsea **(1:30 am, Sunday)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

HOCKEY

HIL Women's final: SG Pipers vs Shrachi Bengal Tigers **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

TENNIS

United Cup: Semifinals **(5 am onwards)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

Bengaluru Open: Final **(4 pm)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

BADMINTON

Malaysia Open: Semifinals **(7:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

Sindhu slides into semifinals

Chirag-Satwik crash out in the quarterfinals

KUALA LUMPUR, PTI

PV Sindhu. FILE PHOTO

Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu advanced to the semifinals of the Malaysia Open after her opponent Akane Yamaguchi of Japan, retired due to injury while India's ace men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty bowed out of the Super 1000 badminton tournament in the quarterfinals here on Friday.

Pitted against third-seed Yamaguchi in the quarterfinals, Sindhu took the opening game 21-11 before the three-time world champion from Japan, who was wearing a knee brace, decided to pull out of the match.

The win took world No. 18 Sindhu's head-to-head record to 15-12 against Yamaguchi.

Sindhu, who is competing in her first tournament after returning from a prolonged injury lay-off, will face second seed Wang Zhiyi of China in the semifinals.

Wang defeated sixth-seeded Indonesian Putri Kusuma Wardani 21-17, 21-18.

Satwik-Chirag lose

Later in the day, India's two-time world championships bronze-medallist men's doubles pair of Satwik and Chirag lost to lower-ranked Fajar Alfain and Muhammad Fikri of Indonesia 10-21, 21-23 in the quarterfinals in 47 minutes.

The third-seeded Indians, finalists in the Hong Kong Open and China Masters last year, were no match in the opening game as the Indonesians dominated with their powerful smashes.

After the Indonesian pair reeled off five straight points, the Indian duo finally opened their account. At 12-4, the situation looked dismal for Satwik-Chirag with Alfian and Fikri taking the last five points with ease to win the opening game.

The second game saw a more committed Indian pair slugging it out and managing to take a substantial lead on a few occasions.

Leading 18-14, Satwik-Chirag could not hold the advantage, allowing the opponents to draw level at 19-all. At 21-all, the Indonesians took the decisive last two points to win the contest.

Jagadeesh, Rahil enjoy pole positions

BENGALURU, DHNS: Hyderabad's Rahil Pillarisetty (RACR Castrol Power1) took a big step forward towards the title by snatching the pole position in the premier Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open category with a blistering lap in the fifth and final round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit on Friday.

Bengaluru's Jagadeesh Nagaraj (Motul Sparks Racing) took P1 in the Stock 30-400cc (Novice) category after negotiating a slippery track due to light drizzle on one section of the track.

Chennai's Jagathishree Kumaresan clinched the crown in the Women category of the Petronas TVS One-Make Championship despite finishing second behind Elakiya Ravi in the five-lap race.

Nazmul's Tamim jibe invites wrath

DHAKA, PTI

A senior Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) official calling former captain Tamim Iqbal **(in pic)** "an Indian agent" has not gone down well with the players in the country.

Tamim, one of the finest openers from Bangladesh, had advised the BCB not to be driven by emotion while deciding the way forward on the national team's participation in the T20 World Cup in India.

Bangladesh have expressed reluctance to tour India for the event starting February 7 and want their matches to be shifted to co-hosts Sri Lanka, citing security concerns.

"The situation is a bit critical at the moment, and making a sudden comment right now is difficult. But one thing you must keep in mind is that many issues can often be resolved through dialogue if everyone comes together," Tamim was quoted as saying by 'Cricbuzz'. "You have to consider where Bangladesh stands in world cricket and what the future of Bangladesh cricket could be and then make decisions accordingly," he said.

Nazmul, chairman of the BCB finance committee, called the left-handed opener "an Indian agent" in a Facebook post.

"This time, the people of Bangladesh witnessed, with their own eyes, the emergence of yet another proven Indian agent," he wrote.

The post received immediate backlash from former and current cricketers, including Taskin Ahmed, Momimul Haque and Taijul Islam.

Even the Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) expressed shock at Nazmul's comments.

Karnataka teams exit in quarters

BENGALURU, DHNS: It was a double blow to Karnataka on Friday as both their men's and women's teams were knocked out in the quarterfinals of the 75th Senior National Basketball Championship at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai.

Playing catch-up from the word go, Karnataka men suffered a 73-80 defeat against Delhi. Jeethander Singh, with 26 points, was the star for the winning side while Sumanth Sathya Narayan's 19-point effort went in vain for Karnataka. The second heatbreak for the state came when the women's team endured a narrow 63-64 loss to Madhya Pradesh for whom Manvi Srivastava (24) was the top-scorer.

Results (quarterfinals): Men: Delhi: 80 (Jeethander Singh 26, Ayush Sharma 18, Ravi Bhardwaj 17, Sivasakthivel M 10) bt Karnataka: 73 (Sumanth Sathya Narayan 19, Aravind Arumukam 14, Aaron Monterio 11). (23-15,16-17,21-19,20-22). **Women:** Madhya Pradesh: 64 (Manvi Srivastava 24, Ananya Maheswari 17, KushPal Singh 10) bt Karnataka: 63 (Sruti Aravind 20, Sanjana Ramesh 14, Bhandhavya M 12).

Karthik, Tanvi bag honours; Arumai gets Lifetime award

BENGALURU, DHNS: FC Agniputra's Karthik Govind Swamy was named the Men's Player of the Year while Bengaluru FC's Tanvi Nair was awarded the corresponding Women's title at the first-ever Karnataka State Football Association (KSFA) Awards Night at the Nandan Grounds here.

State football legend Arumai Nayagam, who donned India colours with distinction, was conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award, while veteran Chikkachennaiah **(in pic)**, the go-to man for the media for all things local football, was honoured with the "outstanding contribution to Karnataka football" award.

FC Agniputra took home the Best Men's Club award, and Kickstart FC were named the Best Women's Club. Gabiel M Mascarenhas was adjudged the emerging referee of the year.

Awards: Men's Player of the Year: Karthik Govind Swamy (FC Agniputra); **Women's Player of the Year:** Tanvi Nair (Bengaluru FC); **Emerging Referee of the Year:** Gabriel M Mascarenhas; **Assistant Referee of the Year:** Maria Tony; **Referee of the Year:** Mrutyunjay L Amatya.

Outstanding contribution of Karnataka football: Chikkachennaiah, B Venkata (Mandya); **Best District Football Association:** Bangalore DFA; **Best District Football Association (outside Bengaluru):** Mangalore; **Best Club Management Award:** Alchemy IFA; **Fair Play Award:** HAL FC; **Coach of the Year:** Siddharth Bhatia (Kodagu FC); **President's Award:** AR Khaleel; **Lifetime Achievement Award:** Arumai Nayagam; **Best Football Academy:** Roots FC & Raman SA; **Youth Player of the Year (boy):** Rakshit P Anil; **Youth Player of the Year (girl):** Rheanna Liz Jacob (Bengaluru FC); **Best Youth Development Club:** Roots FC; **Best Women's Club:** Kickstart FC; **Best Men's Club:** FC Agniputra; **Exemplary Organisation Award (outside Bengaluru):** FC Mangalore & Belgaum United FA.

Sabalenka sends out a warning

BRISBANE, AFP

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka sent an Australian Open warning as she beat Madison Keys on Friday in Brisbane in a repeat of last year's Melbourne final.

Keys stunned Sabalenka nearly 12 months ago but the Belarusian took revenge on the American with a statement 6-3, 6-3 victory to reach the semi-finals.

Keys was playing less than 24 hours after her marathon three-hour win over Russia's Diana Shnaider and had heavy strapping on her thigh.

She turned in an uncharacteristically error-strewn performance and struggled on serve as Sabalenka struck a series of superb returns.

Sabalenka, aiming for her third Melbourne title in four years when the Australian Open begins on January 18, said the Brisbane tournament was helping her find form ahead of the first major of the year.

Belarus' Aryna Sabalenka returns during her win over US' Madison Keys at the Brisbane International on Friday. AFP

Sabalenka will play Czech surprise package Karolina Muchova in the last four after the 11th seed held her nerve to see off world No. 5 Elena Rybakina 6-2, 2-6, 6-4.

Muchova raced through the first set against an out-of-sorts Rybakina, who eventually found some rhythm to claim the second.

But Muchova broke the former Wimbledon champion once in the third set to get over the line, helped by her opponent's 42 unforced errors.

Svitolina advances

Top-seeded Eina Svitolina produced another gritty performance Friday to beat Sonay Kartal in three sets and to reach the semifinals of the WTA Tour stop in Auckland.

Svitolina, ranked 13, trailed 5-3 in the third set before rallying to beat Kartal 6-4, 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5).

Swiatek wins

World No. 2 Iga Swiatek defied a partisan crowd to thrash Australian Maya Joint in Sydney and help take Poland into a United Cup semifinal clash with the USA.

Joint is a talent at age 19 but she was blown away by the six-time Grand Slam champion, Swiatek teaching her a lesson in a 6-1, 6-1 victory.

Alcaraz, Sinner teaming up?

Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner teased on Friday the prospect of teaming up for doubles as the world's top two prepare to open their seasons with a lucrative exhibition match in South Korea, a week before the Australian Open, reports AFP.

IOA increases annual grants to NSFs

AHMEDABAD, PTI : The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Friday decided to increase the annual grants to National Sports Federations (NSFs) from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh during its Annual General Meeting (AGM) here on Friday.

The state Olympic bodies will also get an enhanced sum of Rs 10 lakh annually from the earlier Rs 7 lakh. "The annual grants to NSFs have been doubled from Rs 10 lakh earlier, the grants to state units were also increased," a top official who attended the AGM told PTI.

The AGM brought together representatives of athletes and NSFs, and IOA office-bearers to review the work undertaken during the last few years and to chart the way forward.

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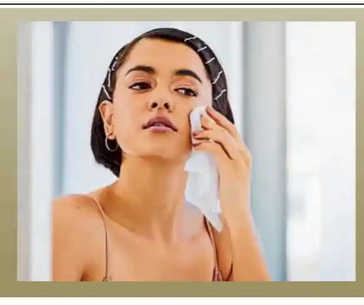

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The grip of winter is still on. Your winter skincare regimen needs to continue through January too. You need to stay hydrated and continue with the sunscreen if you are outdoors. That the winter sun is mild is a myth – the UV rays can still be harmful. Go for some face packs that keep your skin soft through this season.

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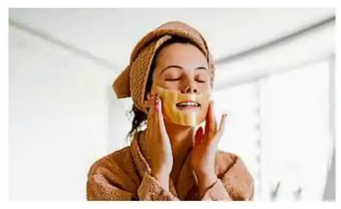
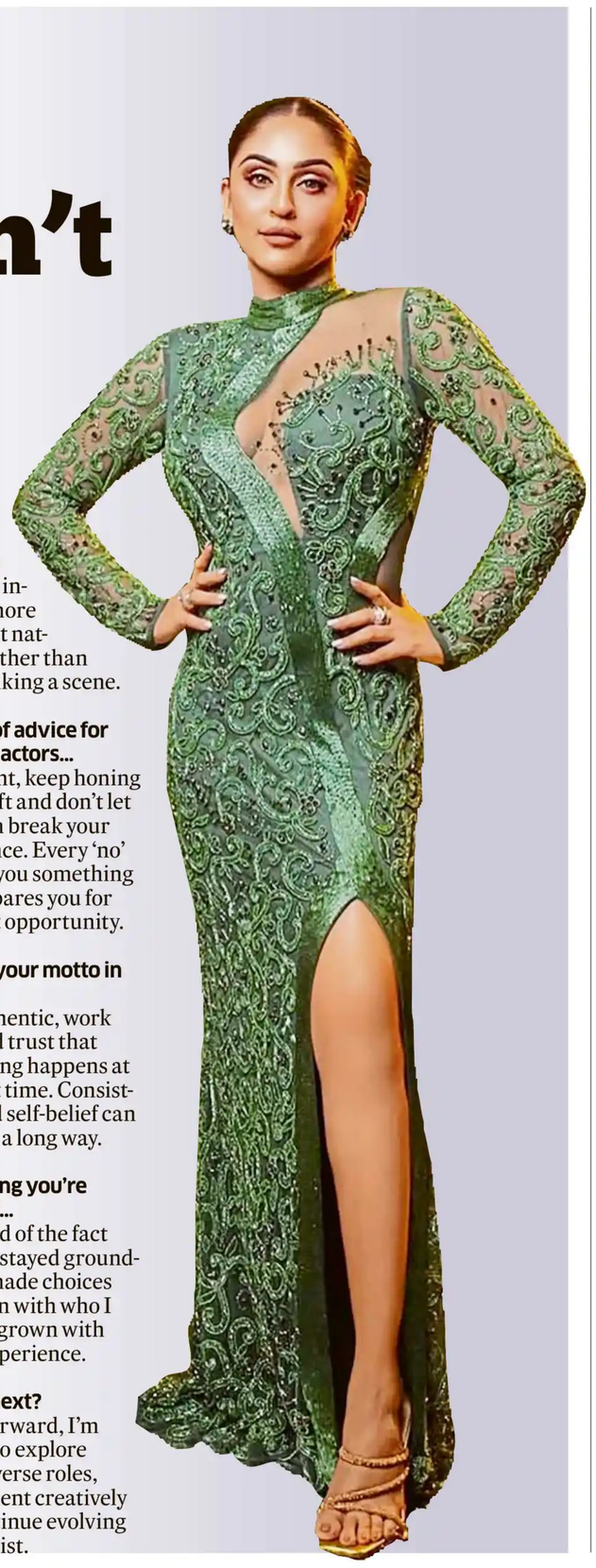


Show Buzz | Krystle D'Souza

'Trust your instincts and don't compromise on your values...'



Actor Krystle D'Souza is making waves as part of the Ranveer Singh starrer Dhurandhar where she wowed the audiences with her killer dance moves in the song Shararat. Krystle is known for her performances in Chehre with Amitabh Bachchan and Emraan Hashmi, and Visfot with Fardeen Khan. She was recently seen in the Web show First Copy with Munawar Faruqui as well.

Shilpi Madan caught up with her for this chat.

> I'm proud of the fact that I've stayed grounded and made choices that align with who I am

Your song Shararat reached 30 million views in just six days. How does the success of Dhurandhar feel?
It honestly feels surreal and extremely fulfilling. When you work on something with so much passion and it resonates with audiences at this scale, it's a very special feeling. The love that Shararat has received in such a short time reassures me that good content always finds its audience. I'm grateful, excited and deeply thankful for all the appreciation coming my way.

How was the experience of shooting this song?
The experience was wonderful. The energy on set was infectious, and everyone, from the cast to the crew, was completely invested in creating something memorable. The shoot was intense yet fun, and there was a beautiful sense of collaboration throughout. Moments like these remind you of why you fell in love with performing on screen in the first place.

Did you anticipate such a massive reach?
You always hope your work reaches people, but this kind of response is beyond expectations. I think when a song has the right emotion, music and visual appeal, audiences connect organically. The love Shararat is receiving feels very genuine, and that's what makes it even more special.

How has your journey in the world of glamour been so far?
It's been a journey filled with learning, growth and self-discovery. The glamour world looks shiny from the outside, but it teaches you discipline, patience and resilience. Every phase - good or challenging - has shaped me into a stronger and more confident individual, both professionally and personally.

What has been your biggest challenge?
One of the biggest challenges has been staying relevant while remaining true to myself. The industry is constantly evolving, and it's easy to feel pressured. I've learnt that trusting your instincts and not compromising on your values is the most important thing.

Your biggest turning point in your career?
Every project that pushed me out of my comfort zone has been a turning point. Choosing roles that challenged me creatively helped me grow as an actor. Those decisions gave me confidence in my craft and helped me redefine my journey on my own terms.

Your fitness and beauty routine?
I believe fitness and beauty come from consistency and balance. I follow a regular workout routine, eat clean most of the time, stay hydrated and ensure I get enough rest. Skincare for me is simple - less is more. Mental peace plays a huge role in how you look and feel.

Movies or OTT?
I enjoy both equally. Films have their own larger-than-life charm, while OTT platforms allow for deeper storytelling and layered characters. For me, the platform doesn't matter as much as the strength of the script and the character I'm portraying.

A skill you've picked up recently during a shoot schedule?
I've learnt to trust my instincts more and react naturally rather than overthinking a scene.

A piece of advice for aspiring actors...
Be patient, keep honing your craft and don't let rejection break your confidence. Every 'no' teaches you something and prepares you for the right opportunity.

What is your motto in life?
Stay authentic, work hard and trust that everything happens at the right time. Consistency and self-belief can take you a long way.

Something you're proud of...
I'm proud of the fact that I've stayed grounded and made choices that align with who I am. I've grown with every experience.

What's next?
Going forward, I'm excited to explore more diverse roles, experiment creatively and continue evolving as an artist.

MIT–World Peace University launches WPU Goa

(Left to right) Dr Shiv Tripati, Dr Rahul Karad and Prof Hrridaysh Deshpande.

Goa, long-celebrated as one of the world's most loved tourist destinations, is rapidly emerging as a vibrant hub for knowledge, creativity and innovation. Reinforcing this transformation, MIT–World Peace University (MIT-WPU), Pune, announced the establishment of WPU Goa, a next-generation university envisioned to redefine higher education through global thinking, transdisciplinary learning and a deeply human-centric philosophy.

The announcement of WPU Goa is the culmination of an extensive two-year national and global visioning exercise that brought together leading academicians, education leaders and experts from diverse disciplines. Through 28 visioning conferences held across India and 11 international conferences, this initiative stands among the largest academic co-creation efforts undertaken in the country. The collective dialogue focused on reimagining the role of universities in a rapidly-evolving world, one shaped by complexity, technological disruption and the need for sustainable and inclusive development.

"Universities of the future must be transdisciplinary by design, discovery-driven in pedagogy and embedded within integrated research ecosystems," said Dr Rahul Karad, Executive President, MAEER's MIT Group of Institutions and founder WPU Goa. "Equally important are living-learning scholar communities and strong national and global immersions that prepare students to address complex real-world challenges."

Dr Karad, added that the visioning process revealed a strong national consensus on the future of higher education. "Five core ideas emerged clearly - transdisciplinarity, discovery-driven pedagogy, integrated research ecosystems, living-learning communities and global immersion. These principles form the academic foundation of WPU Goa," he said. Dr Shiv Tripathi, Advisor, MIT-WPU, Goa. Prof Hrridaysh Deshpande, Founder, Elektra University, was present on the occasion.

The choice of Goa as the location for the new university is both strategic and symbolic. Located in Thivim, north Goa, the WPU Goa campus benefits from excellent connectivity while being embedded in a culturally-rich and serene setting.

Central to the WPU Goa vision is its purpose-built, fully residential campus, designed as an integrated ecosystem for learning and living. The campus is being developed as a sustainable, net-zero environment that harmonises modern comfort with ecological responsibility.

With WPU Goa, MIT-WPU aims to position Goa not just as a destination to visit, but as a destination to learn, innovate and lead. Admissions to WPU Goa are now open for the current academic year, inviting students from across India and the world to be part of this transformative educational journey.

Bhima Gold marks its centenary with 'Together Purever'

With the centenary film 'Together Purever' Bhima Gold reaffirms its belief that legacy is not measured in years alone, but in the lives touched, stories shared and values passed forward

Bhima Gold, one of south India's most respected and enduring jewellery houses, marked a historic milestone of 100 years with the release of 'Together Purever', a centenary film that captures the brand's philosophy of togetherness, continuity and shared legacy.

Conceived as a cultural narrative rather than a conventional brand film, 'Together Purever' mirrors Bhima's own Century-long journey alongside families, traditions and evolving identities. It reflects how the brand has remained woven into the lives of generations - quietly present through moments of celebration, transition and belonging.

Anchored in the idea that life moves in circles, the film draws inspiration from the Circle of Life, tracing transitions from childhood to womanhood, from nurturing to protecting, from dreaming to healing. Through evocative visual chapters such as The Divine Mother, The Protector, The Dancer, The Healer and The Dreamer, the film explores the many roles that define individual and collective existence. These chapters symbolise transformation not just at a personal level, but also the bonds that connect generations through time.

At the heart of the film is a symbolic tribute to the divine feminine - embodying strength, creation, compassion and resilience. Her journey reflects the evolving roles of women across generations, resonating deeply with Bhima's belief that jewellery is far more than adornment. It is a silent witness to life's milestones, emotions and transitions - carried forward from one generation to the next.

The narrative is further elevated by a lyrical composition rooted in classical Indian thought and philosophy. The verses speak of inner strength, shared dreams, courage and collective progress, reinforcing the central message that growth, fulfilment and legacy are most meaningful when experienced together.

'Together Purever' stands as a reflection of Bhima's 100-year legacy - one built not only on craftsmanship and purity, but on relationships nurtured over time. As families evolved, traditions adapted and generations changed, Bhima remained a constant presence, rooted in values that transcend eras.

With the release of this centenary film, Bhima Gold reaffirms its belief that legacy is not measured in years alone, but in the lives touched, stories shared and values passed forward. 'Together Purever' is an ode to continuity - where the past, present and future remain forever connected.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. VARIETY

A mix of mashed strawberry and honey adds glow and hydration to your skin

WINTER WISE

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

ROSE WATER AND GLYCERINE

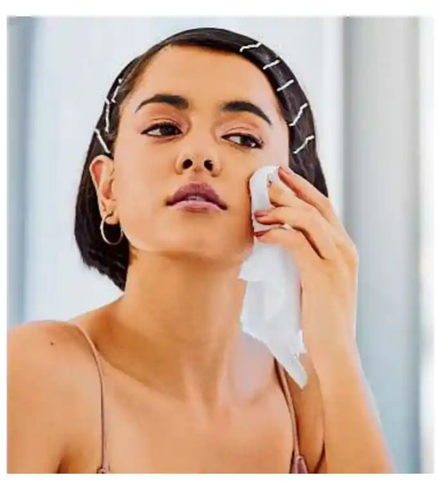
The anti-bacterial and antioxidant properties of rose water soothes skin irritation common in winter. This mix locks in the moisture and keeps your skin soft. Glycerine is a great hydration agent that prevents your skin from going dry in winter. It strengthens the skin's protective barrier too.

AVOCADO AND OLIVE OIL

This combo is great for deep nourishment. It is ideal for extremely dry winter skin. Avocado contains healthy fats that moisturise the skin. It soothes dryness and builds the skin's natural barrier. Olive oil is a natural moisturiser with antioxidant and anti-bacterial properties. This face pack is just right for the winter months.

Easy ways to get the make-up off

Shilpi Madan has some tips to zap make-up in the winter



Looking for the best way to work off the make-up from your face before turning to bed? Get your clean-up guide in place.

Oil up

As the nip in the air takes over, the winter works quickly on your skin to leave it feeling dry and taut. Apply baby oil or Vitamin E oil over your face in circular motion to gently massage the skin. Then rub a damp cotton swab all over to ease out the make-up from your pores.

This leaves your skin feeling supple and smooth too.

Micellar magic

While travelling, pack in micellar gel for easy and quick application on your face. Else make use of micellar water. The gentle face cleanser comes bereft of alcohol and fragrance, and works for all skin types.

Follow up with a toner to remove any traces of left-over grime. Remember, witch hazel as an ingredient in toners tends to make your skin dry.

Gentle scrub

The Japanese secret to spotless skin brings in a rice flour make-up remover. Use this as a gentle scrub along your T-zone to zap away the make-up. It takes care of eye make-up application as well.

Else, take to homemade scrubs in pounded oats, or even the fine white sugar in a sachet works in a pinch if you are on the move.

Some winter tips

- Bring in the eye serum and anti-ageing creams
- Winter care entails a dense overnight cream
- Ensure you sleep on a silk pillowcase
- Change the pillowcase every few days to prevent zits
- Wash make-up applicator brushes fortnightly. Dry thoroughly

Millions still turn to Paramahansa Yogananda for inner peace

Everything else can wait, but your search for God cannot wait. With this simple, yet profound, reminder, Paramahansa Yogananda called on humanity to place the quest for inner realisation at the very center of life. As the world commemorates his 133rd birth anniversary, his life and teachings continue to resonate across cultures, faiths and generations - offering a timeless message of peace, clarity and divine love.

Born on January 5, 1893, in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, Paramahansa Yogananda displayed from childhood an intense longing for spiritual truth. That yearning led him to his revered guru, Swami Sri Yukteswar Giri, under whose firm, yet compassionate, guidance he attained the highest spiritual realization. In 1915 he entered India's ancient Swami Order, and in 1920, responding to a divine call, he journeyed to the United States to share India's age-old science of God-realization with the modern world.

A pioneering ambassador of yoga to the West, Yogananda introduced millions to Kriya Yoga -a scientific technique of meditation preserved through an unbroken lineage of masters. Of this sacred practice, he affirmed, "Kriya Yoga plus devotion works like mathematics - it cannot fail." Through meditation, he taught, human beings can directly experience God as peace, joy and guiding wisdom within their own consciousness.

His spiritual classic, Autobiography of a Yogi, remains one of the most influential spiritual books of all time. Translated into more than fifty languages, it has

inspired readers across the globe, including technology pioneer Steve Jobs - who reread it annually and gifted it widely -as well as public figures such as Rajinikanth and Virat Kohli. For countless seekers, the book has served as a gateway to meditation and a deeper understanding of life's spiritual purpose.

–Vidhi Birla

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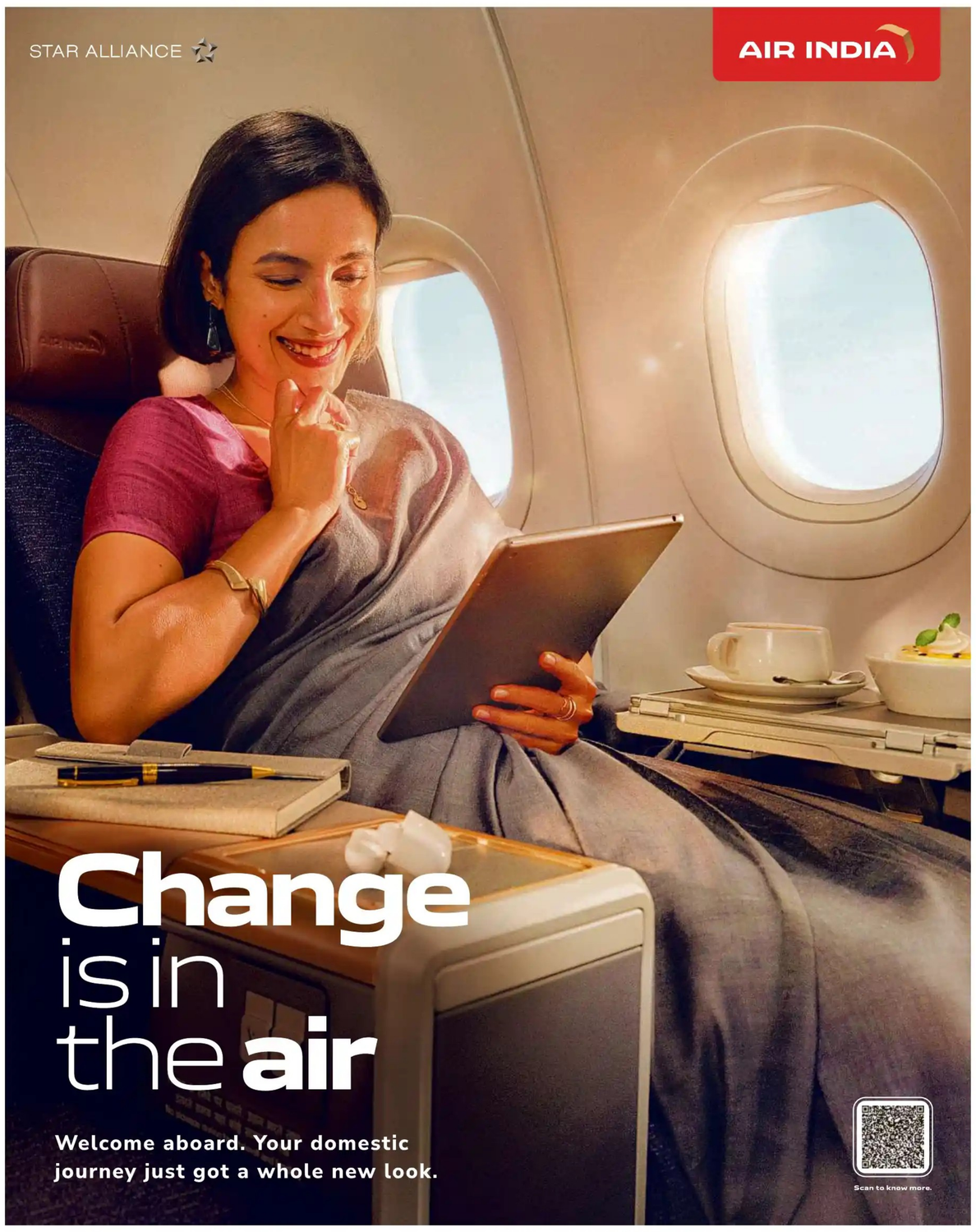

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Required Post	No. of post
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Note:
1. Candidates possessing requisite qualification as per DCI norms may submit their application to The Principal, VSDCH and College mail **vsdchbangalore@gmail.com On or before 16-01-2026 at 4.00 P.M**
2. Right to reject any applications without any reason is reserved with the Rajya Vokkaligara Sangha.
3. Last date to receive applications with relevant documents at **VSDCH dental college & hospital is 16-01-2026 at 4.00 P.M along with D.D for Rs. 1,180/- in favor of Principal VSDCH Dental College.**

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M/s Mitravriunda Educational Trust

Extract of Resolution passed at the meeting of the partners held on 09-01-2026 at the registered office of the firm at 10.00 am.

The Trust owns property bearing New Municipal No.32, PID No.13-68- 32, old site No.84, formed in the land bearing Sy.No.20 of Laggere Village, measuring East - West on the Northern side 27 feet, on the Southern side 181½ feet and North to South on the Eastern side 48 feet and on the Western side 47 feet, totally measuring 1080.625 square feet, Situated at 8th Cross, J.C.Nagara, Bangalore -560086 and the Trust has decided to sell the above said property in favour of SRI.P. VIJAYAN for the benefit of the Trust for present market value and with all the Trustees have agreed for and accordingly this day a resolution was passed and all the trustees have physically present at the time of meeting and signed this resolution.

Place: Bangalore Sd/-
Date: 09.01.2026 Trustees

PERSONAL

Change of Name

I, ASWATHAPPA, Residing at Doddakurugodu, Chikkaballapur-561208 have changed my name as ASHWATHAIAH. K.M., vide affidavit dated 7/1/2026 before Notary Anuradha.D., Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Basavaraj,** residing at No. 195, Near BSN School, Kuntha Reddy Layout, Jigani Post, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560105, have changed my name to **RAMAPPA BASAPPA** vide affidavit dated 07-01-2026 before notary Sumithra N, Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called **RAMAPPA BASAPPA** only

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I, SWAPNA VIKAS KULKARNI, Residing at #204, 3rd cross Vidyamanyanagara Andrahalli Bangalore-91 have changed my son name from AGASTYA NADIGER to AGASTYA GANESH NADIGER, vide affidavit dated 7/1/2026 before Notary Devaraja.E, Bangalore

I, RAJEEVA. A, Residing at #12, Lakshmipura main road, Dombarahalli, Bengaluru-562123 have changed my name as RAJEEVA K.A., vide affidavit dated 7/1/2026 before Notary Anuradha.D, Bengaluru

I, SWAPNA VIKAS KULKARNI, Residing at #204, 3rd cross, Vidyamanyanagara, Andrahalli, Bangalore-91 have changed my son name from AATREYA NADIGER to AATREYA GANESH NADIGER, vide affidavit dated 7/1/2026 before Notary Devaraja.E, Bangalore

I, VEENA S. W/o.A.Amal Raj R/a#1135, 17th Cross 3rd Block, 1st`Stage HBR Layout Bangalore 560043,Have Changed my`Name to VEENA_AMALRAJ vide`affidavit Dated:05.1.2026 before`Notary C.Sharada Bangalore.

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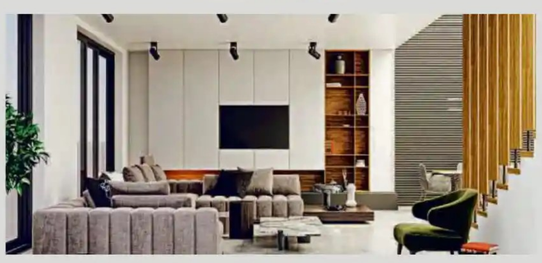

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